

THE CRITIC:

A Record of Literature, Art, Music, Science, and the Drama,

FOR THE YEAR 1858.

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1858.

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MEMOIRS OF

The Learned, Literary, and Scientific Societies.

NO. I.—THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

Is a series of Memoirs intended to illustrate the learned societies of Great Britain, that of the Royal Society takes the lead, both "by right of conquest and by right of birth;" and yet, although it be in furtherance of a design long contemplated and prepared for, the appearance of this brief sketch at this precise moment has in it something singularly opportune. Not many days have elapsed since the Royal Society accomplished the seventh migration which it has experienced during its glorious career of two hundred years. From "Dr. Goddard's lodgings in Woodstreet," to the College-rooms of Bishop Wilkins, thence to Gresham College until driven by Cromwell's "Ironsides" to Arundel House, back again to the College, and afterwards to the little house in Crane-court, until invited by Government to take up its abode at Somerset House, the Royal Society has at last found a fitting, and we trust a lasting abiding-place at Burlington House, once the home of the Cavendishes. How strangely these things come about! Precisely one hundred years ago (that is to say, in the year 1757), Lord Charles Cavendish, then a Fellow of the Royal Society, received the highest reward which it was in the power of the society to bestow, in the shape of the Copley medal, for "a very curious and useful invention of making thermometers;" and now the society takes up its abode in the mansion which was so long in the possession of his family. Lower down in the list of Copley medal-men we find the name of the Honourable Henry Cavendish, the profound mathematician, electrician, and chemist, who first demonstrated exactly the composition of air and water, and made many invaluable discoveries in chemical science. This gentleman was the son of Lord Charles Somerset, a cadet of the house of Devonshire; and he could have little imagined, when he went down to the obscure House in Crane-court to make his communication to his brother fellows—"upon the nature of fixed air"—that the Royal Society was destined one day to take possession of the splendid mansion in which dwelt the chief of his family.

Thanks to the permission of Charles Richard Weld, Esq., the assistant-secretary and librarian of the society, and to the kind attention of Mr. Walter White, the clerk, who accompanied us over the rooms, we have had an opportunity of examining the new abode of the Royal Society. It is in every way worthy of it. To the pedestrian in Piccadilly, the wall which has been described as "the most expensive wall in England" no longer offers an impenetrable veil. Passing through the gateway, he will find a spacious courtyard, bounded to the right and left by the wings, and at the end by the main body of the mansion. The wing to the right is in the exclusive occupation of the University of London; the wing to the left consists of two spacious apartments, which are in the joint occupation of the Royal Society and the London University. That which is nearer to Piccadilly is the great hall, which is to be the meeting-room of the Royal Society. It is a spacious and

lofty apartment, and the workmen are even now engaged in fitting it up with a dais for the President, and seats for the Fellows. Three or four hundred of the Fellows (a number which, it must be regretfully admitted, has never been known to meet together) might assemble within that room without much inconvenience. Around, and in obedience to the express stipulation made when the rooms in Burlington House were granted to the society, the splendid collection of portraits—a collection which contains the images of almost all the great men who have shed the light of their genius upon the society—is to be placed. Then indeed will Gay's line become a prophecy—

The wall with animated pictures lives.

The other room in this wing is also very spacious, and is fitted to contain a large proportion of the society's library. Both these rooms are to be at the disposal of the London University on such occasions as the holding of examinations and the conferring of degrees. The main building of Burlington House is in the occupation of the Royal, the Linnæan, and the Chemical Societies. The Royal Society has six rooms on the first floor, besides the private residence of Mr. Weld. The council-chamber is a fine apartment, and was once the dining-room of the mansion. The decorations are rich and tasteful, and the ceiling (which was painted, we believe, by Marco Ricci) is very beautiful. Mr. Weld's office is also a handsome apartment. The magnificent library of the society covers the walls of all the six rooms, and a classification is effected which in the old library at Somerset House was impossible. Thus, the mathematical books are brought together into one room; the physiological into another; a third is entirely filled with *Transactions*. Throughout the rooms are dispersed the various relics which belong to the society. Here is the mask taken by Roubiliac from Sir Isaac Newton's face immediately after the death of the great philosopher; there is the lock of hair from that noble head which brought forth the *Principia*; in one corner the reflecting telescope which he constructed with his own hands; in another (but jealously retired from the eyes of all but the privileged) the precious charter-book of the society, which contains many glorious autographs, but none more glorious than his; there, under a glass shade, is Sir Joseph's balance, which was not paid into Court's; and there should be, but is not, the lacquered japan cabinet containing Leuwenhoeck's set of microscopes, of which more anon. All these relics, the heirlooms as it were of the Royal Society, are of the deepest interest, recalling as they do some of the most important personages who have figured in its annals.

It scarcely comes within the province of this Memoir to trace the origin of learned societies in the reconstruction of learning and philosophy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. That is a subject too vast to be lightly or briefly treated, and yet it seems impossible to account for

the origin of these associations without making some reference to it. Knowledge, who had burrowed in strange holes whilst the mail-clad block-heads of the Middle Ages were hammering out each other's no-brains, began to peep out furtively when the sixteenth century dawned. Discovering, like Noah's dove, that there were some few spots upon which she might rest the sole of her foot, she presently ventured forth more boldly. For centuries she had lain low among the monks, who had hoarded her up as a miser does his treasure, without increasing her value, but on the contrary rather decreasing it (as many a palimpsest manuscript, telling of precious authors erased in order that the vellum might be covered with monkish trash), will testify. Gathering new courage, she walked forth in her glory; the Reformation flooded the world with light, like the revelation of the sun; knowledge leapt forth from secret springs, and covered the earth with a fertilising inundation. Like Arethusa released from her rocky prison, she poured forth in resistless torrents; Shakspeare arose and Bacon arose, and with gigantic hands set the machine of human thought in motion—a motion which, unlike that of a material machine, has not been slackened by resistance, but has grown ever swifter and swifter, gathering strength constantly as it went on, until it has resulted in the mad whirl and whirl of the present century, which, like the too much accelerated fly-wheel of a steam-engine, threatens to run away with itself into destruction.

A great deal of interesting information might be collected into a popular form respecting the first appearance of academies in Italy, their spread over the world, and the effect which they immediately produced. Tiraboschi enumerates one hundred and seventy-one academies in Italy, one of the best known among which was that of the Della Crusca, at Florence, which was founded in 1582, and still exists. This institution was founded for the purpose of purifying the native tongue, and derived its name from two Italian words signifying "from the chaff," referring to the winnowing process which it proposed to accomplish. The most famous scientific academies in Italy were the Lyncean, at Rome, of which Galileo was a member, and the Florentine Accademia del Cimento, to which Torricelli, the worthy pupil of that ancient philosopher, belonged. The French Academy was established by royal letters patent in 1635, under the protection of Cardinal Richelieu, who, with that wary foresight which is the distinguishing mark of his character, discerned in the encouragement of letters the best means of curbing the ignorant turbulence of the nobles.

In England, the growth of the principle of association for learned and scientific purposes was slow and sure. The earliest effort in that direction appears to have been by Archbishop Parker, who founded a society of antiquarians in the reign of Elizabeth. It need hardly be observed that that was not the present Society of Antiquarians, which was founded by Humphrey Wanley in 1707. The old one, after an existence of thirty-two years, was arbitrarily dissolved by

James I., a monarch who was so fond of learning that he seemed to be jealous of anybody beside himself paying any attention to her. Charles I. was too much occupied with the unhappy dissensions between himself and his subjects to busy himself about the foundation of societies; but it is upon record that he granted licence to found a college, to be called by the pretentious and euphuistic name of Minerva's Museum—"for the instruction of the young nobility in the liberal arts and sciences." How far a scheme was likely to encourage learning which confined its operations to the nobility might be easily imagined, if we did not observe in the programme of the scheme that, side by side with a "Doctour of Philosophie and Physick," there was to be "a Professour of Defence." Minerva's Museum was carried on, we believe, for some years in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden.

Bacon himself had in a manner presented his own idea of an academy for the encouragement of learning and science in his "New Atlantis;" and the picture which he drew of "Solomon's House, or the College of the Six Dayes' Works," excited the imagination of his followers, as we shall presently see. It is clear, however, that about the middle of the fifteenth century, although England was at the time convulsed with internal struggles and dissensions, a feeling of desire for some association of the kind was spreading fast among all true lovers of knowledge.

And indeed there was sore need to organise some reliable system for the collection of such ascertained facts as were real contributions to human knowledge; for there was a vast amount of error and of ignorance prevalent at the time. Perhaps in these days of spirit-rapping and table-moving we have little right to reproach our ancestors with credulity; but even the most enlightened persons belonging to the period of the Royal Society's foundation were not without a tinge of the grossest superstition. Touching for the king's evil was commonly believed in, and that by some of the ablest men. The sagacious Evelyn records the details of the ceremonial, as performed by Charles the Second, with a gravity highly suggestive of his faith in the whole business. The works of Bacon himself abound in miraculous modes of cure; Sir Kenelm Digby wrote a work on "The Cure of Wounds by the Powder of Sympathy;" and Elias Ashmole was a believer in astrology and alchemy. Not a few shrewd men put their faith in the power of the divining-rod; belief in demonology was, of course, common enough; and the burning of witches formed part of the law of the land for sixty years after the foundation of the Royal Society. Surely it was high time for the disciples of the new school of analytical reasoning to combine and present a serried front against darkness and error.

The excellent *History of the Royal Society*, by Charles Richard Weld, Esq., the learned Assistant-Secretary and Librarian of the Society, has considerably lightened the task of the present writer. Mr. Weld has so thoroughly cleared up the subject that he has left little to be gleaned after him; and, although it would of course have been possible to resort to most of the original sources of information whence he drew his materials, it has been deemed sufficient to accept from him the main facts in the history of the society so far as he goes—premising that, as he has stood at the fountain-head, and has enjoyed the very best means of acquiring information, there is nothing left for the after-seeker but to draw deductions from and recombine his facts.

Three works, each entitled *History of the Royal Society*, were already in existence when Mr. Weld produced his; that by Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Sprat, in 1667; that by Dr. Birch, in 1756; and that by Dr. Thomson, in 1812. All these, however, are very incomplete. The Bishop's book is necessarily so, seeing that the society had only existed about twenty years when it was written. It is, however, a very remarkable work, and fully merits Dr. Johnson's eulogium as "One of the few books which selection of sentiment and elegance of diction have been able to preserve, though written upon a subject flux and transitory." Dr. Birch's work does not carry the history of the society beyond 1687, and is swelled out to its portentous bulk of four quarto volumes by the reproduction of a number of papers which had been read at the meetings; whilst the tendency of Dr. Thomson's book is rather to explain the progress of science, as exemplified by the *Transactions* of the society,

than to give an historical account of that body itself.

It is a mistake to suppose that a society like the Royal Society can be called into existence by the exertions of any single individual, much less by the arbitrary will of a monarch. Such an association must be the result of an inward impulse, arising from the recognition of the absolute necessity for it. When that recognition has taken place, and the scattered elements have come together, as it were, by the law of attraction, then the assistance of a monarch, or of some other powerful patron, may be of the greatest service in making them coalesce, in fostering and encouraging their nascent tendencies, in strengthening that which is weak, in granting substantial aid, and in removing such stumbling-blocks as ignorance and prejudice may cast in the path of progress. And such was the process whereby the Royal Society grew into being. At first a few gentlemen, who were engaged in scientific investigations, or, as Dr. Wallis (who was the archivist and Savilian professor at Oxford during the greater part of the seventeenth century) quaintly expresses it, "Divers worthy persons, inquisitive into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning," got into the habit of meeting in London at stated times, beginning about the year 1645, for the purpose of communicating to each other the results of their separate investigations. It may well be that zeal for the investigation of natural science was not the only object which brought them together. If the reader will consider the circumstances of the times, he will perceive that they give a ready warrant for the belief that any pretext would be eagerly seized hold of by intellectual men which would afford them a common ground of meeting, altogether independent of those questions of state policy and religion which were then tearing the commonwealth to pieces. The spectacle of a few thoughtful men thus calmly meeting together to discuss "the circulation of the blood, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, and the descent of heavy bodies," when all around them was storm and contention and party strife—subjects arming themselves against their King, and the King making war upon his people—would have been interesting indeed, even if it had not been the precursor of such a noble institution as the Royal Society.

Foremost among this worshipful company we observe the names of Bishop Wilkins, who shrewdly surmised that "it is probable our earth is one of the planets," and who wrote a book to prove that the moon was inhabited. The meetings took place sometimes at the lodgings of Dr. Jonathan Goddard, in Wood-street, Cheapside; sometimes at the Bull Head Tavern, in Cheapside; and sometimes at the lecture-room of the Astronomy Professor of Gresham College. In 1648 some of the company went to reside in Oxford; and branch meetings, still keeping up a constant correspondence with the parent association, were held in that ancient University. Among the new names which joined that lusty offshoot we perceive those of Bishop Ward, the author of "Praellectio de Cometis;" Sir William Petty, the eminent political economist and founder of the Lansdowne family; and the accomplished Robert Boyle, who was then residing in Oxford. Mr. Weld quotes some of the minutes of this branch society from the original MS. in the Ashmolean Museum, from which it appears that if any member wilfully absented himself for six weeks together he was expelled the society, and that the member who failed to perform such exercise or experiment as he had been required to perform was to forfeit half-a-crown, "and shall perform his task notwithstanding." The existence of this branch society has given occasion for some to maintain that the Royal Society was first founded in Oxford; but that is not true. Leigh Hunt, in "The Town" says "the Royal Society originated in Oxford;" and many writers have adopted that mistake. It is, however, perfectly clear that the London meetings preceded those at Oxford, although it may with some show of justice be urged that, but for the valuable accessions of distinguished members at Oxford, the scheme would ere long have fallen through. During all the time that the Oxford Society was holding its meetings the parent society never suspended its operations, albeit it had to contend against some unpleasant difficulties. In 1658 it held its meetings at Gresham College, which place was seized upon by the soldiers, just then freed from restraint by the death of the only man who could tame them,

and turned into a barracks. Matthew Wren wrote to Christopher a letter, dated Oct. 25, 1658, in which he relates that one day, going to the college to perform an experiment, he was stopped at the gate by a man with a gun, who told him that "there was no admission upon that account, the College being reformed into a garrison." In the following year the virtuous and learned Evelyn, who had become a member of the fraternity, addressed a letter to Boyle, proposing the development of the association into what he called "a Philosophic-Mathematic College," which was to be a sort of philosophical phalanstery or agapemone, fit enough for Plato's Republic or the Isle of Laputa, but scarcely for this rough and practical world.

I propose (writes Evelyn) the purchasing of thirty or forty acres of land in some healthy place, not above twenty-five miles from London, of which a good part should be tall wood, and the rest upland-pastures, or downs, sweetly irrigated. If there were not already a house, which might be converted, we would erect, upon the most convenient site of it, near the wood, our building, viz., one handsome pavilion, containing a refectory, library, with drawing-room and a closet; this the first story; for we suppose the kitchen, larders, cellars, and offices, to be contrived in the half story under ground. In the second should be a fair lodging-chamber, a pallet-room, gallery, and a closet; all which should be well and very nobly furnished, for any worthy person that might desire to stay any time, and for the reputation of the college. The half story above for servants, wardrobes, and like conveniences. To the entry forefront of this a court, and at the other backfront a plot walled in of a competent square, for the common seraglio, disposed into a garden; or it might be only a carpet, kept curiously, and to serve for bowls, walking, or other recreations, if the company please.

And so on with great minuteness into the rest of the plan. The cost of the whole, as estimated by Evelyn, was to be about 1600*l.*; for which he himself proposed to devote his own "small fortune," as one of the founders. Evelyn and his wife were to reside in the college, as well as the other founders, and there was to be "an ancient woman" to dress the meat. The objects of the fraternity were to be the performance of experiments in natural science, and the advancement of literature. It was to be an intellectual oasis in the midst of the barrenness of the times; and the proposition, so far as Evelyn was concerned, was certainly very noble-minded on his part; but it never came to anything. Possibly Boyle feared that the scheme was impracticable. At any rate it was not more fruitful than a similar one propounded by the poet and naturalist, Abraham Cowley, who published shortly afterwards a plan almost exactly identical, in the form of a *Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy*. About the same time Sir William Petty devised another scheme, perhaps rather more practicable than the others, for a "College of Tradesmen, where able mechanics, being elected fellows, might reside rent free." Although none of these ingenious notions resulted immediately in anything, they must be taken as undoubted proofs of the general perception of the necessity for some organised means of promoting scientific cultivation. Some authors have declared that it was from these abortive schemes that the ultimate constitution of the Royal Society arose; but it would probably be more accurate to say that the Royal Society was the result of that disposition of the public mind which engendered these schemes. The seed sown by Bacon in the *New Atlantis* was blooming, and was soon to bear fruit.

The Restoration of Charles the Second in 1660 was hailed by all classes in this country with a satisfaction which the recent troubles amply account for. The accession to power of one whose vices were as yet unknown, and who brought with him the reputation of being a generous young prince, naturally awakened expectations which were destined to be frustrated in great part. Some good, however, was done, for the incorporation of the Royal Society was one of the first acts with which Charles inaugurated his return to the throne of his ancestors. Within six months of the King's return a formal representation was made to him of the state and objects of the Society, to which he replied that he "did well approve of it, and would be ready to give encouragement to it." The result was the Charter of Incorporation, which was soon afterwards granted.

In a list of the persons who composed the society in 1660 we find the following distinguished names, in addition to those which have been already specified,—the versatile and talented

Sir Kenelm Digby; Mr. John Vaughan, afterwards an eminent judge; Dr. Glisson, a celebrated physician and writer on anatomy; Dr. Ent, another celebrated physician; Sir Charles Scarborough, physician to the King; Christopher Merrett, physician and naturalist; Thomas Willis, the celebrated anatomist (whose work on the Anatomy of the Brain and Nerves is now of higher authority than his treatise on the Souls of Brutes); and Elias Ashmole, the antiquary, alchemist, and historian of the Order of the Garter. At this time the proceedings of the society took a more definite form than before. Officers were appointed, an amanuensis engaged, and minutes of the proceedings regularly entered up. The meetings were held at Gresham College by permission of the trustees of that institution, and continued there, with a few brief interruptions, up to 1710.

It has been already stated that from the year 1660 the proceedings of the society were regularly entered up. A reference to these proves both the zeal with which the members pursued knowledge and the extended field over which they laboured. The custom was to direct certain members to investigate certain questions and to report the result to the society. Thus, "Dr. Petty and Mr. Wren be desired to consider the philosophy of shipping, and bring in their thoughts to the company about it." Afterwards we find a request to Dr. Petty "to deliver in his thoughts concerning the mode of clothing." One of the earliest entries in the register is a series of "Questions propounded and agreed upon to be sent to Tenerife, by the Lord Brouncker and Mr. Boyle," a document which is of the greatest interest, not only because the questions are very much to the purpose, but because they prove the efforts which the society was making to collect sound information from every available source. Soon it became customary for persons outside the society to send in knotty points to be unravelled. King Charles himself grew to be very fond of this amusement, which he appeared to regard as a way of proving the extent of his own knowledge—forgetting that a child may put a question that the wisest philosopher can hardly answer. Thus we find the King sending Sir Robert Moray with two loadstones and a message "that he expected an account from the society of some of the most considerable experiments of that nature upon them." Afterwards he sent to know "why the humble sensitive-plant stirs, or draws back, at the touching of it?" There is an old story with which everybody is acquainted (but for which there does not seem to be much warrant), to the effect that the king waggishly posed the society by asking them how it was that when a vessel was quite full of water a fish might be put into it without causing the water to overflow? the answer, of course, being that the premises were inaccurate; but, be that fact or fiction, many of the questions entered upon the books as having occupied the attention of the society are not much less puerile. Thus, we find Sir Kenelm Digby informing that august body that "the calcined powder of toades reverberated, applied in bagges upon the stomach of a pestiferate body, cures it by severall applications;" and the Duke of Buckingham, upon one occasion, promises that he will "bring into the society a piece of a unicorn's horn." Shortly afterwards, it is recorded that "the fresh hazell-sticks were produced, wherewith the diving experiment was tried, and found faulty." Another entry is amusing enough. "July 24.—A circle was made with powder of unicorn's horn, and a spider set in the middle of it, but it immediately ran out several times repeated. The spider once made some stay upon the powder." Then there is another entry. "May 14.—Mr. Southwell produced a great horn, said to be a unicorn's, and also showed a little one that grew on a cock's head, being the spur of the fowle, cutt close till it bled, and set on the head immediately after the comb was taken off (and it being squeeze'd on, and a few ashes strow'd thereon to quence ye blood), when the cock was fresh capon'd." These, however, are but exceptions to the general rule, which was to propose such questions as were likely to elicit sound and useful knowledge.

On the 16th of October 1661, the King announced his intention of becoming a member of the society. It must be confessed that, in his dealings with the society, Charles the Second occasionally exhibited an amount of good sense which he did not usually bring to bear upon his kingly proceedings. Dr. Sprat tells us

that once when some foolish persons objected to the admission of a candidate into the society, on the ground of his being a *shopkeeper of London*, "his Majesty gave this particular charge to his society, that if they found any more such *tradesmen* they should be sure to admit them all, without more ado." There was something of Louis the Magnificent of France waiting upon Molière in this; but it was salutary nevertheless. The Royal Society has always had a slightly aristocratic tendency, and we see that its first royal patron had to check this impulse at the outset of its career. Nor was this the only occasion upon which the versatile Monarch manifested a most paternal interest in its progress; for not only was he in the constant habit of referring matters to it to be resolved, but, instead of straightway forgetting all about the matter, as it was the privilege of a Sovereign Prince to do, he would send for the results of the inquiries, and (as Dr. Sprat tells us) sometimes "reproved them for the *slowness* of their proceedings." It should be remembered that in those days the word "slow" had not the same signification which the vulgar now attach to it; but the "merry monarch" either did, or pretended to, take the greatest personal interest in these proceedings. Thus we learn from the same authority, that "he has been present and assisted with his own hands at the performing of many of their experiments in his gardens, his parks, and on the river." Some of these experiments were, it must be confessed, rather inconsistent with the jovial temperament of this Sovereign; for when the Royal Society began to claim its privilege of demanding a body from the executioner for the purposes of dissection, Samuel Pepys tells us that, on a certain day, the King "saw Dr. Clark and Mr. Pierce dissect two bodies, a man and a woman, with which his Majesty was highly pleased." Once the King wagered 50*l.* to 5*l.* that air was compressible by water; and, after the experiment had been performed by Hooke, it "was acknowledged that his Majesty had won the wager."

On the 15th of July 1662, King Charles gave to his beloved society a still more solid earnest of his favour, for it was upon that day that the charter of incorporation passed the Great Seal. The preamble of this document was prepared by Wren, at the request of his brother Fellows; and truly, if he had any sense of the ridiculous, neither himself nor his associates could have appeared very dignified in their own eyes when he read to them the passage in which the man of many mistresses is made to say that "Amongst our royal hereditary titles, to which, by Divine Providence, and the loyalty of our good subjects, we are now happily restored, nothing appears to us more august, or more suitable to our pious disposition, than that of father of our country, a name of indulgence as well as dominion, wherein we would imitate the benignity of Heaven, which in the same shower yields thunder and violets, and no sooner shakes the cedars but, dissolving the clouds, drops fatness." It must have won a smile from even the grave and philosophical Evelyn, to hear that fine antithesis of thunder and violets; but he himself was not exempt from these little loyal eccentricities, if we may judge by the vote of thanks awarded to him by the society for having "done honour to the company in an excellent panegyrick to the King's Majesty." In addition to the charter, the King made a grant of lands in Ireland to the society; but, owing to the complication of affairs in that country at the time, it does not appear that the society ever benefited by them to the value of one halfpenny. Next year (1663) it was found that the first charter, although sufficient for the incorporation of the Society, had omitted many rights and privileges which were necessary for its beneficial working: It was superseded, therefore, by a second charter, which supplied all omissions and deficiencies. One of these privileges was the licence to claim the corpse of some person *quæ mortem manu carnificis passæ fuerint*—"who had suffered death by the hands of the executioner (literally 'meat-maker')"—for anatomical experiments. This privilege was already enjoyed by the Royal College of Physicians and the College of Surgeons.

The charter of incorporation appointed Lord Brouncker President of the Royal Society; but previously to that, from the 6th of March 1660, Sir Robert Moray had presided over its meetings. This was a clever and well-educated Scotch gentleman, who had been a soldier. He was a Privy Councillor to Charles II., and by his interest did much to promote the well-being of the

society. His own scientific achievements do not appear to have been very considerable; the only one worth mentioning being the invention of an "engine for hearing." The pretensions of Lord Brouncker to be considered a philosopher were of a much higher order. He also was one of Charles's courtiers; but he was a mathematician of no mean order, "being the first to introduce continued fractions, and to give a series for the quadrature of a portion of the equilateral hyperbola." He contributed several valuable papers to the *Transactions*, and was the real translator of an anonymous edition of Descartes' *Musica Compendium*. He held several offices under Government and in connection with the court, and seems to have been in every way fitted to push the interests of a society, which had apparently determined to pursue a royal road to the favour of the Muse of Science. And yet, although Lord Brouncker was undoubtedly a very able man, who "exhibited great zeal in the performance of all the duties attached to that distinguished office," and who "was always prepared to devote his time to experiments, and ready to make such improvements upon them as were suggested by his penetration and skill," we must presume to doubt whether, had he not been my Lord Brouncker, he would have been selected in preference to Evelyn or to Boyle. It is also pretty certain that, however zealous in the discharge of his duties, Lord Brouncker had not all the qualifications that could be desired in a president of the Royal Society. Even Pepys (who loved a lord from his heart) was forced to confess upon one occasion that when "he pretended to make a congratulatory speech," his Lordship "did it in the worst manner in the world." This disposition to have a lord for its president has never deserted the Royal Society; for, out of the twenty-eight gentlemen who have occupied the presidential chair, from Sir Robert Moray to Lord Wrottesley, eleven have been members of the House of Peers. It must be confessed, however, that generally speaking, and more particularly in later times, the choice of presidents has been justifiable upon other grounds than those of mere nobility.

The charter of incorporation granted by Charles gave the society a stability of position which it had not before attained. It was now recognised as the greatest scientific body in England, if not in the world—the culmination, in fact, of those lights which the philosophy of Bacon had scattered over his country. Cowley, who had an hereditary love for "sweet spicery," was so elated by the prospect that he produced an Ode in praise of the society, connecting it directly with the great Chancellor, whom he compared to Moses, as standing upon the summit of his own wit, and thence discerning the promised Land of Knowledge. After a very prosaic statement of the objects to be achieved by the society, the "last and best of metaphysical poets" thus continues:

Mischief and true dishonour fall on those
Who would to laughter or to scorn expose
So virtuous and so noble a design,
So human for its use, for knowledge so divine.

From this it would appear that there were even then waggishly-disposed persons who were not disinclined to cast ridicule upon the proceedings of the society; and when we find that Evelyn himself was bringing in papers relating—how a friend of his had a wife who, when she "cuts the cocks for capons, by plucking the feathers, and applying them warm in an incision of the comb, and there holding them under her finger for some minutes till the gore blood hath well cemented them, they grow without fail,"—this is scarcely to be wondered at.

In the year 1662, however, the society began to make decided advances in the right direction. One of the papers presented in this year was Evelyn's famous *Sylva*, and it was at this time that the celebrated Robert Hooke was appointed curator of experiments. Hooke was a man of genius and of immense scientific attainments. He was the pupil and assistant of Robert Boyle and of John Wallis, the mathematical predecessor of Newton. After his appointment as curator of experiments, he was made Professor of Geometry in Gresham College, and in 1677 he succeeded Oldenburg as Secretary to the Royal Society. To the importance of the experiments which he suggested, and the perfect manner in which he executed them, the Royal Society was greatly indebted for the position which it afterwards assumed as a scientific tribunal of the last resort. It was in this year, also, that certain little matters

were carried out, the importance of which may not be so appreciable to scientific minds. Then it was that the society (after grave and pregnant excogitations on the part of Master John Evelyn) adopted for its coat of arms "A shield bearing a canton only, with the motto *Nullius in verba*"—an abbreviation of Horace's

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.

"Pledged to swear by the words of no master"—a fit motto for an eclectic school of Philosophers. Then also was it that King Charles gave a new indication of his royal favour, by presenting the society with a silver-gilt mace—which emblem of authority is to this day placed before the President or Vice-President whenever the society meets in solemn convocation. It was once very commonly believed that this mace was identical with the famous piece of silversmith's work which Oliver Cromwell ignominiously termed "a bauble"—it being supposed that the mace of the old House of Commons, after being carried off in the custody of Colonel Otley, was laid by in a place of safety during the Protectorate, and when it came to light once more was presented by the King to the Royal Society. Upon the faith of this, many persons have gazed upon the mace of the Royal Society with an interest derived entirely from the belief that it was the identical one which had been so ill-treated by old Oliver; but, unfortunately for this view, Mr. Weld, after a most careful and intelligent research into the facts of the case, has established beyond all possibility of doubt that it is *not* the "bauble mace," but was made expressly for the society. Mr. Weld apologises for thus rudely destroying what he terms "a pleasing and long-cherished illusion;" but adds that, "although the mace may not be as curious as before to the antiquary, divested as it now is of its fictitious historical interest, yet it is much more to be respected; for surely a mace designated 'a bauble,' and spurned from the House of Commons by a Republican, would scarcely be an appropriate gift from a Sovereign to the Royal Society." As for the veritable "bauble mace," there can be little doubt that Oliver sent it to the melting-pot and had it coined into pay for his Ironsides, in the worshipful company of all the old regalia, including the gold walking staff of Edward the Confessor and other venerable relics, whose doubles to this day pass muster in the Tower Jewel-office for the genuine articles, and excite a proper amount of awe and reverence in the minds of all beholders. And this seems the proper place to refer to another relic belonging to the Royal Society, which is, perhaps, more interesting in its nature, and which is as jealously guarded as it is justly valued. This is no other than the volume containing the charters and the autographs of all the Fellows. Mr. Weld describes it as

A very handsome volume, bound in crimson velvet, with gold clasps and corners, having on one side a gold plate bearing the shield of the society and on the other side a corresponding plate showing the crest—an eagle or, holding a shield with the arms of England. The leaves of this book are of the finest vellum. The arms of England, superbly emblazoned, adorn the first page, and those of the society, equally well executed, appear on the next. A copy of the second charter follows, occupying seventeen pages and a half. This is succeeded by sixteen pages containing the third charter; and this again by the statutes of various dates, extending over sixty-six pages. Eleven blank leaves then intervened, after which the first page of the autograph portion of the volume exhibits, within an ornamental scroll-border headed by the royal shield, the signatures Charles R., Founder; —James, Fellow; and George Rupert, Fellow. All these autographs are in good preservation; that of Charles II., having been evidently written with a finely-pointed pen, is not so distinct as the others, but is, nevertheless, quite legible. The next page is occupied with the autographs of various foreign ambassadors; and the third and succeeding pages contain the signatures of the Fellows beneath the obligation which heads each leaf.

Upon these pages are to be found names of which every Englishman has reason to be proud; and that the homage of curiosity is paid to at least one of those glorious signatures may be gathered from the fact that the name immediately beneath that of Isaac Newton is nearly obliterated by the pressure of the countless forefingers which have indicated those immortal words. A splendid muster-roll of fame is this charter-book of the Royal Society.

But to return to more common-place matters. The society being now firmly constituted, it became necessary to acquire by some means or other a fixed income. The fate of the grant of

Irish lands from the King has already been told. The society, like everybody else, found it much easier to get charters and maces from the merry monarch than hard cash; and it was speedily recognised that, so far as pecuniary affairs went, it must depend entirely upon the exertions of its own members. The income of the society in 1660 (arising solely from subscriptions) was 527*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*, and the arrears due by the Fellows then amounted to 158*l.* 4*s.* 6*d.* It is strange that all throughout the early history of the society this impossibility of making the Fellows pay their subscriptions was a constant difficulty. Surely one would suppose that among such men as the Fellows of the Royal Society that difficulty would scarcely be felt. But no; secretaries laboured as much as possible; energetic presidents, like Sloane and Banks, devoted their best energies to the task; yet, for a very long time, there was always a large item under the head of arrears, which the most zealous endeavours and the most stringent regulations were powerless to diminish. Not that the Royal Society is at all singular in this respect. On the contrary, it appears to be a disease inherent to every society that has ever existed. Whether it be carelessness or want of system, or an absolute disinclination to pay, we cannot tell; but there never was yet a society formed in which difficulty has not been experienced in getting together the subscriptions, however trifling the amount. Fellows and members are too apt to forget that money is the sinews of many other things besides war, and that a zeal for the object in view is never so well exemplified as when the expression of it is accompanied by a cheque upon some banker. When the statutes were framed in 1663, the fees payable by the fellows were an entrance-fee of forty shillings on admission, and a weekly payment of one shilling, or fifty-two shillings per annum, "towards the charge of experiments;" yet in 1666 we find the treasurer complaining that his receipts were only 290*l.* odd, and the arrears due for unpaid subscriptions, 678*l.*! Whereupon Oldenburg writes to Boyle: "How to get them paid is the all important question." In 1671 the arrears had mounted up to 1696*l.*, and the receipts for that year to only 141*l.* 16*s.* Two years after this the arrears were 1957*l.*, and, "on carefully revising the list of Fellows, it was found that out of 146, the number on the books, only fifty-three paid well, seventy-nine did not, and fourteen were absent in the country." In 1682 the defalcations of members had become so conspicuous, that it was found necessary to pass a resolution, that no person should be eligible for the Council who had not paid his dues to the treasurer. When Newton was elected president (in 1703), he introduced a law compelling the Fellows before their admission, to give a bond for payment of their contributions—a measure which (we are told) "was the means of causing the subscriptions to be paid much more regularly." Still, however, in 1728 Sir Hans Sloane found it necessary to propose that the Fellows in arrears should be sued for the same; but this does not appear to have been acted upon. In 1740 the arrears amounted to 1844*l.* 16*s.*, and it needed all the business tact of Sloane to extricate the society from its difficulties. It is satisfactory to know that latterly this inconvenient stumbling-block has been entirely done away with; a defaulting Fellow (if such a phenomenon be possible) is immediately, without any further trouble, struck off the list; the Society arguing very properly that if a man has not even so much interest in its welfare to pay his subscription, he does not deserve the honour which membership confers upon him.

In March 1664-5 the Council of the society ordered one of the secretaries, Mr. Oldenburg (Dr. Wilkins was the other secretary), to print a number of *Transactions* on the first Monday of every month, "if he have sufficient matter for it." This was the beginning of that magnificent collection of *Transactions*, which now extends to 146 volumes. The scheme did not, however, answer very well at first; for in 1665 we find Oldenburg writing to Mr. Boyle that "Mr. Davis, the printer, tells me that of the first *Transactions* he printed, he had not vended above 300, and that he fears they will hardly sell so many as to repay the charge of paper and printing." Perseverance, however, brought its own reward; and the series, once begun, was never discontinued.

During the greater part of the year 1665 the members of the Royal Society absented themselves from London on account of the plague. With all their experiments, they do not seem to

have made any serious attempts at discovering the cause of that terrible scourge; only Hooke wrote to Boyle, frankly admitting that he could not, from any information he could learn of it, judge "what its cause should be." It is true that, when the plague was well over, the Society did make a show of searching out its cause; but the inquirers do not seem to have got much beyond a theory started by Sir George Ent, that the cause was an insect which "laid eggs hardly discernible with a microscope," and so "vernimated the air." In the following year (1666) they were busy at work again, and (as Mr. Oldenburg says) "undertaking several good things, as the collecting a repository, the setting up a chemical laboratory, a mechanical observatory, an astronomical observatory, and an optick chamber." At this time also they set about the collection of a museum, making a good beginning by the purchase of "a very handsome collection of natural things," which had formerly belonged to Mr. Hubbard. This collection was arranged in the long gallery of Gresham College, and was rapidly increased by the donations of members. Among others, Sir R. Moray presented "the stones taken out of Lord Balcarris's heart in a silver box. This collection was afterwards absorbed into the vast bulk of the British Museum. The Great Fire did not reach Gresham College; but it inconvenienced the society to the extent of compelling them to give up their rooms for the temporary use of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen; and in the mean time Mr. Howard (afterwards sixth Duke of Norfolk, and the donor of the Arundel marbles to the University of Oxford) offered them accommodation in Arundel House; upon the site of which Arundel, Norfolk, Surrey, and Howard-street, Strand, now stand. This gentleman afterwards presented the society with the fine library of Arundel House, a most munificent gift, which is thus described by Maitland:—

This fine collection consists of 3287 printed books, in most languages and all faculties; and are chiefly the first editions of books, soon after the invention of printing. And the valuable and choice collection of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Turkish, and other rare MSS., consists of 544 volumes, which, together with the former, are thought to be of such value as cannot be paralleled for the smallness of their number.

At this time the society took a deep interest in the operation of injecting blood of one animal into another, and many experiments were made under Hooke's superintendence. At a subsequent period the same operation was tried upon human subjects, as will presently appear. During the brief stay of the society at Arundel House the Duchess of Newcastle paid them the visit which is recorded in such amusing terms by Pepys (who was then a member):

After dinner walked to Arundel House, the way very dusty, where I find very much company in expectation of the Duchess of Newcastle, who had desired to be invited to the society; and was, after much debate *pro* and *con*, it seems many being against it, and we do believe the town will be full of ballads of it. . . . Several fine experiments were shown her of colours, loadstones, microscopes, and of liquors; among others, of one that did, while she was there, turn a piece of roasted mutton into pure blood, which was very rare. After they had shown her many experiments, and she cried until she was full of admiration; she departed, being led out and in by several lords that were there.

In June 1667 an event occurred which was calculated to disturb very much the philosophy of the society; this was no less than the arrest of its secretary, Henry Oldenburg, upon political grounds. The whole affair seems very mysterious; but it is probable (as Mr. Weld suggests) that the suspicions of Government were excited by the voluminous correspondence carried on by Oldenburg with foreigners; and it should be remembered that at the time there was a great deal of excitement about the aggressive policy of France, which the Commons were urging the King to resist. At any rate, the matter was soon cleared up, for the worthy secretary was not more than a month in the custody of the Lieutenant of the Tower, and the event does not appear to have in any degree disturbed the confidence reposed in him by the society.

In 1668 a plan was set on foot for building a college, as the society was entitled to do under a clause in its charter. The sums collected proved, however, very insufficient for the purpose, and the scheme fell through, albeit Sir Christopher Wren designed a plan for the building. It may have been that the project was set aside as superfluous by a grant from the Crown of "Chelsea College, and what may belong to it." But this

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donation, apparently so munificent, proved of little service to the society, for various persons immediately stepped forward and claimed lands which were thought to be included within the grant; and, after many futile attempts to render the college profitable or even useful to itself, the society was only too glad to restore it to the Crown, receiving as an equivalent the sum of 1300*l.*; and it is said that more would have been obtainable "but for the nuisance of Prince Rupert's glass manufactory:" the said Prince being, as is well known, a notable glass-maker, and having immortalised himself in that trade by the philosophical toy known as "Prince Rupert's Drops." Reference was lately made to the experiment of transfusing blood. This was first tried in England upon a human being in November 1667. The Council of the Royal Society made a proposal that it should be tried "upon some mad person in Bedlam;" but Dr. Allen, the physician to that hospital, very properly refused to sanction such a proceeding. Subsequently, however, "a poor student" named Arthur Coga, offered himself for a guinea, and was at once accepted. The operation was performed very dexterously by Dr. King, in the presence of Mr. Howard, the Bishop of Salisbury, and several other persons, and the blood transfused was that of a sheep. Coga was none the worse for it; for, after the operation, he "drank a glass or two of canary and took a pipe of tobacco," and continued quite well. When asked how it was that the blood of a sheep had been chosen, he replied: "*Sanguis ovis symbolicam quandam facultatem habet cum sanguine Christi, quia Christus est Agnus Dei* (the blood of a sheep has a certain symbolical relation with the blood of Christ, because He is the Lamb of God)." Pepys gives an account of the experiment in his "Diary;" but speaks of Coga as "a poor and a debauched man." A year afterwards a poor maniac died in Paris under a similar operation, and this threw the matter into such discredit that the experiment was never afterwards attempted by the Royal Society.

In 1669 the name of Flamsteed, the father of modern astronomy, first made its appearance upon the books of the society, and next year he presented a paper *On Eclipses*. At that time the future astronomer royal was only twenty-four years old; but he had even then made himself famous by the discovery of the real causes of the equation of time. On the 21st of December 1671 the Bishop of Salisbury, Seth Ward (himself no mean astronomer), proposed as a candidate "Mr. Isaac Newton, Professor of the Mathematics at Cambridge," who was duly elected a Fellow on the 11th of the following January. Thus we have brought upon the field almost simultaneously two of the greatest philosophers that the world ever saw. The name of Flamsteed may indeed be somewhat obscured in the eyes of the public beneath the shadow of his stupendous enemy (for it must be regretfully confessed that the lives of these two great men were embittered by the direst and most unprofitable dissensions); but modern philosophers recognise in him a star of the first magnitude, a vast and comprehensive genius, a pioneer in discovery, without whose aid not even Newton could have penetrated so far. The quarrels between these great men will be reverted to at the proper place.

When Newton was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society he was only twenty-nine years old; but he was already numbered among the first philosophers in Europe. Already had he discovered the Binomial Theorem, in a futile effort to effect the quadrature of the circle; already had he established the fundamental principles of his doctrine of Fluxions; already had he demonstrated the law of the force by virtue of which planets gravitate towards the sun. Nor had his labours in the practical department of science been less important than his discoveries in the speculative. Three years before his admission into the society he had constructed with his own hands the first reflecting telescope that ever was directed against the heavens; and that identical instrument is now one of the most precious relics in the possession of the Royal Society. It was in the experiments preliminary to the construction of this instrument (whilst he was engaged in grinding glasses for the telescope), that Newton hit upon his famous discovery of the nature of light; and it was this that supplied the subject of the first paper which he contributed to the society, and which was deemed to be so important that his consent was at once asked to have it published, which was accordingly done. In con-

nection with this discovery, Mr. Weld quotes an amusing anecdote from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, to the effect that on the arrival of a prism from abroad, the Custom-house officers asked Newton what was its value, with a view of fixing the amount of duty—to which the philosopher replied that it was invaluable; and the officials, taking him at his word, fixed the duty at a very high sum. From the time of his election as a Fellow to his death, Newton invariably made the Royal Society the first recipient of his additions to human knowledge; and when we remember the opposition which prejudice and jealousy made to those discoveries both at home and abroad—an opposition too in which such distinguished men as Hooke, Huyghens, and Leibnitz took part—and the necessity that there was for encouraging his mighty labours with a well-organised support, we are inclined to agree with Mr. Weld, that—"Fortunate, indeed, was it for science that such a body as the Royal Society existed, to whom Newton could make his scientific communications; otherwise it is very possible that the *Principia* would never have seen the light." That Newton's philosophical labours had not at that time done much towards filling his purse is evident from the fact that under the date of January 28, 1673, the Council Minutes of the Society record: "It was mentioned by the Secretary that Mr. Newton had intimated his being now in such circumstances that he desired to be excused from the weekly payments; it was agreed unto by the Council, that he should be dispensed with, as several others were." So that at that time Newton was unable to furnish the weekly contribution of one shilling; for had he been simply unwilling he would have taken the liberty of owing the money, as the greater proportion of the Fellows then did.

At this time (1673) the Society began to receive communications from the most eminent men of science abroad; among others, from Leuwenhoeck, of Delft, the father of microscopical discovery. This eminent philosopher subsequently testified his regard for the Royal Society by bequeathing to it the collection of microscopes which he used during his lifetime. These microscopes were made by the philosopher himself, and were all mounted in silver. So pleased was the society with this precious bequest, that it presented the daughter of Leuwenhoeck with a magnificent silver bowl in acknowledgement of it. The cabinet containing the microscopes remained for a long time in the possession of the society, but has since mysteriously disappeared—when, how, or by whose agency are mysteries. There is, perhaps, a theory upon the subject in the minds of those who have investigated the matter, and it may be an expectation that some day or other the microscopes will turn up at the death of some collector whose organ of acquisitiveness preponderates somewhat over the moral functions; but for the present we have nothing about them to record, but that they are lost, stolen, or strayed.

The year 1675 was a great year for building; for in it the first stone of St. Paul's Cathedral was laid, and Greenwich Observatory was built. This was another of Charles the Second's sensible acts. On it being represented to him that a perfect set of lunar observations would assist navigation, by furnishing the means of accurately determining the longitude of a ship at sea, this strange monarch, who found time amid all his dissipations to do a few very useful things, took Flamsteed into his counsels, and built Greenwich Observatory. Flamsteed was the first astronomical observer appointed, at a salary of 100*l.* a year; a sum, be it remembered, which would be very inadequately represented in the present day by similar figures. With the inconsistency of his character, the King thought that when he had built the Observatory and appointed the astronomer, nothing remained to be done; he quite forgot all about the instruments, and poor Flamsteed might have taken his lunar observations with his naked eyes (if that were possible), if the Royal Society had not generously come forward and lent him all their astronomical instruments, by the help of which Flamsteed was enabled to make a number of most useful observations. The year 1677 was marked in the annals of the society by the retirement of Lord Brouncker from the presidential chair, which he had held for fifteen years, and by the death of the secretary Oldenburg. Hooke and Dr. Grew were elected secretaries, and Sir Joseph Williamson (on whose behalf Mr. Weld can only plead the possession of "considerable

talents for business and courtiership") was elevated to the presidency. Hooke succeeded Oldenburg in superintending the publication of the *Transactions*.

The presidency of Sir Joseph Williamson lasted only three years; but it was distinguished by the accession to the list of the name of Edmund Halley, the friend and almost the compeer of Newton. Although at that time only twenty-two years old, the future Astronomer-Royal had performed a voyage to St. Helena for scientific purposes, and had drawn up his *Catalogus Stellarum Australium*; besides which, he had invented a method of constructing the phases of a solar eclipse, and had made many important discoveries in connection with the then little understood subject of magnetism.

In 1680 Sir Joseph Williamson resigned the presidency; whereupon Boyle was chosen, but declined to accept the office, on account of the obligation which it would entail of taking the Test and other oaths, having "a great tenderness in point of oaths;" so Sir Christopher Wren was elected, who had no such tenderness. If this wonderful man had not been a great architect, he would have been a great natural philosopher. The *Transactions* of the Royal Society contain abundant evidence of this in the number of experiments which he conducted and the papers which he contributed upon subjects connected with natural history. When Wren retired, which he did in 1682, the chair was offered to Evelyn, who refused it from some scruples of modesty, for it could not in his case have been an unwillingness to incur trouble; and eventually Sir John Hoskyns, one of the Masters of Chancery, "a most learned virtuoso, as well as lawyer" (so Evelyn reports of him), was elected. Hoskyns only kept the chair for one year. It is related of him that he was the only pupil of Dr. Busby who never was flogged by that birch-loving pedagogue, and that, although generally a very grave and reserved man, "when his spirits were elevated by the bottle he was remarkable for his presence of mind and quickness of apprehension." To him succeeded Sir Cyril Wyche, whose sole title to the presidency appears to have been that he married Evelyn's niece. The latter, who had a sharp eye for detecting excellencies in his friends, and who never omits any specific title to respect when any such existed, can only praise him generally, as "a man of perfect integrity, and a noble and learned gentleman." During his reign Dr. Papin introduced his "digester" to the notice of the society, and conducted his experiments under their patronage; whereof Evelyn relates that he produced "a jelly made of the bones of beef, the best for clearness and good relish, and the most delicious that I have ever seen or tasted. I sent a glasse of it to my wife, to the reproach of all that the ladies ever made of the best hartshorn." The next President was gossiping but clever Mr. Samuel Pepys, who was elected in 1684. Mr. Weld says that Pepys was chosen "on account of his high literary attainments;" but it seems very probable that his official position and Court influence had much more to do with the matter; for, to speak the truth, his most Gracious Majesty, the Royal Founder, had grown to be sadly oblivious of his beloved society. No more knotty questions for them to resolve, nor even paternal reproofs for their "slowness." A premature old age, the result of his inordinate debaucheries, was creeping upon Charles Stuart; and he who cared no longer for his mistresses could scarcely be expected to have much affection to waste upon the Scientific Muse. He died in the next year, 1685. The last time he communicated with the society was some years before his death, when he sent a recipe for the cure of hydrophobia, which had been invented by his physician, Thomas Frasier. As might be expected, the Royal Society did not receive the slightest countenance from the next and last Stuart, James the Second. Pepys was a zealous President during his two years of office: a portrait of him, by Knoller, now forms part of the society's collection of pictures. In 1685 the society made a slight alteration in its constitution. Hitherto the routine of business had been conducted by two honorary secretaries; but when one of these, a Mr. Aston, threw up the office in a sudden fit of pique, the society resolved that it should be no longer in the power of any single individual to inconvenience them, and to that end appointed an assistant-secretary, who was to be immediately under their command, in addition to the two honorary secretaries. Halley was the first to

fill the office of paid secretary, and in order that he should do so, it became necessary for him to resign his position as a fellow. The Mr. Aston who resigned, afterwards bequeathed to the society a handsome legacy and a small estate at Mablethorpe, in Lincolnshire, which is still in its possession, and returned last year a rental of 116*l.* 16*s.* The office thus dignified by Halley is identical with that which is now held by Mr. Weld.

The year 1686 was a memorable one for the Royal Society, for it was then that Newton laid before it the MS. of his *Principia*. Immediately after this was done, a resolution appeared upon the books, giving directions for the printing of the work at the expense of the society. The immediate direction of this was entrusted to Halley, who was to be under the superintendence of Newton himself. Subsequently it appeared that the society was not in funds sufficiently to be able to undertake the cost of this; whereupon Halley undertook it upon his own charge,—a deed for which the world can never hold him in too high honour. It is to be noted that at that time London publishers would have nothing to do with mathematical books, and Newton's *Principia* would consequently have had but small chance of finding favour with "the trade." The publication took place about the middle of 1687, Halley having worked at his task with equal zeal and industry; and when the *imprimatur* was signed by Pepys, it was undoubtedly the most conspicuous fact of his presidency. The manuscript of the immortal work is still in the possession of the Royal Society, and it is justly esteemed "its most precious scientific treasure." It is written entirely in Newton's clear, precise hand, every letter and figure being formed with the most scrupulous exactness.

Lord Carbery succeeded Pepys as President of the Society, of whom all that can be said is that he was another peer, and no better qualified than some of his predecessors for the office which he undertook to fulfil. After him came another lord, the Earl of Pembroke, who appreciated so little the honour which had been thrust upon him, that he never once filled the presidential chair during the whole time he was in office. He resigned very soon, and another attempt was made to coax Evelyn into the chair. This, however, was futile, and so Sir Robert Southwell was elected, who presided over the society for five years, and is eulogised by Evelyn as "a sober, wise, and virtuous gentleman." In the year 1691 the society sustained a heavy loss by the death of Boyle, who had been not only a valuable member, but also a constant benefactor of the society, to whom his great intellect and wealthy purse were alike devoted. The philosophical character of this refined gentleman is well summed up in Evelyn's letter to Wotton, which is printed in Willmott's "Letters of Eminent Men:"—

Never did stubborn matter come under his inquiry but he extracted a confession of all that lay in her most intimate recesses; and what he discovered he as faithfully registered and frankly communicated, in this exceeding my Lord Verulam, who (though never to be mentioned without honour and admiration) was used to tell all that came to hand without much examination. His was probability; Mr. Boyle's suspicion of success.

Mr. Boyle bequeathed to the society his fine collection of minerals, in addition to the many donations of money and curiosities which he had made during his lifetime; also some books and a collection of his own MSS., which now form part of the society's library. Among other such gifts he presented the celebrated object-glass made by Huyghens, of 122*ft.* focal length.

At the anniversary in 1693, Mr. Charles Montague, afterwards the celebrated Lord Halifax (nicknamed "The Trimmer"), was elected president. This extraordinary man had only just attracted the notice of the Earl of Dorset by the poem of "The Country Mouse and the City Mouse," which he wrote in collaboration with Matthew Prior, and was on the high road to prosperity when the Royal Society selected him for its chief. The exigencies of his ambitious career did not give him much leisure to enjoy that dignified post, for, after a brief reign of three years' duration, he resigned. The most remarkable event during his time in connection with the Royal Society was the appearance upon its lists of the name of John Woodward, the eminent geologist and the founder of the Woodwardian Professorship of Geology at Cambridge, who afterwards earned a most unenviable notoriety in connection with the society. The

next president was that eminent lawyer and accomplished gentleman, Lord Somers, who occupied the chair for five years. During this period, although quietly progressing, the society does not seem to have accomplished much that is worthy of note. The name of Dr. Hans Sloane appears, indeed, in connection with such business as really was done, as belonging to one of the secretaries,—a name which was ere long to occupy a more prominent place upon the archives of the Royal Society. In the year 1698, Halley, the secretary, was dispatched by Government to determine the latitudes and longitudes of the British Settlements in America.

It was about this time that the society became once more the object of much ridicule from persons who viewed its proceedings with a contempt, bred either of ignorance or of cynicism. It may, perhaps, be possible that the comparative inaction of the society for some years, and the frivolous nature of some of the questions with which it consumed its time, may have given some slight occasion for this; at any rate, this was the quarter upon which its assailants attacked it; and a pamphlet, called "The Transactioneer," was published, in which an attempt was made to reduce into absurdity the regular *Transactions* issued by the society. Whoever really was the author of "The Transactioneer," he was a buffoon; for it is nothing but a witless and occasionally obscene parody of the lowest possible description. Some of the more decent items in the table of contents are:—

Ipecacuanha, harmless and hurtful,
That men can't swallow when they're dead.
Fish, different from one another.
Four sorts of lady bugs.

These are represented to be fair samples of the society's contributions to knowledge. Dr. Woodward (who, although a member, was known to hold the proceedings in some disregard) was suspected of being the author of this production; but he denied it so positively and clearly, that we cannot but regard this as an empty conjecture. Woodward was an excellent geologist, but a crabbed fellow. During the presidency of Sir Isaac Newton he quarrelled with Sloane; and it is related that once, when Sir Hans was reading a paper of his own composition, Woodward pulled a face; whereupon the former complained that the latter was making grimaces at him. Upon this Dr. Arbuthnot (who liked to have his joke with everybody) rose, and, with the greatest gravity, requested to be "informed what distortion of a man's face constituted a grimace!" The Council, however, took it very seriously, and Woodward's grimace cost him his expulsion from the society. When the question was debated whether or not his offence should be so gravely visited, some one pleaded in Woodward's favour that "he was a good natural philosopher;" but Sir Isaac Newton observed that, "in order to belong to that society, a man ought to be a good moral philosopher as well as a natural one."

More serious, however, than such puny attacks as the "Transactioneer" was the artillery of such men as Swift and Butler. The former directed his "Voyage to Laputa" against those persons who mistake speculation for action, and who fancy that they are resolving the secrets of nature when they are only amusing themselves with curious antics and puffing up their own conceit. It is to be feared that some of the members of the Royal Society were fairly open to that charge, and it is certain that the Dean's production gave the greatest offence to many of them. Butler, too, had a gibe for those who

Search the moon by her own light,
To take an inventory of all
Her real estate and personal;—
To measure wind and weigh the air,
And turn the circle to a square,
And in the braying of an ass
Find out the treble and the bass;
If mares neigh *alto*, and a cow
In double diapason low.

It must be confessed that, judging from some of the entries in the minute-book, the society does not seem to have accorded a proportionate amount of attention to objects of real importance. Thus we find that when, on the 14th of June 1699, a certain Mr. Savery exhibited before them "his engine to raise water by the force of fire"—in other words, the STEAM-ENGINE in its infancy—the society was "entertained;" and yet, when Sir Hans Sloane provided "a live crocodile and some opossums" for their amusement, we find that the exhibition "afforded considerable interest to the Fellows."

In 1703 the society sustained a heavy loss by the death of Hooke, their learned and indefati-

gable secretary, a great pioneer of science, and one whose career deserves a separate biography. We believe that whenever some competent person shall take it in hand to do justice to the memory of Hooke, he will be found to have been one of the greatest discoverers that have ever laboured in the field of science. Ideas which were really bred by his intuitive genius have made the fame of many and many a philosopher, who has accepted the glory without doing honour to the source from which it really sprung. The memory of this remarkable man has been attacked on the ground that his temper was jealous and irritable, and that it was his influence that kept Newton so long from assuming a prominent place in the Royal Society. The Frenchman Biot, one of Newton's biographers, said flippantly of Hooke that "when he died society gained more than geometry lost," forgetting, poor short-sighted mortal, that society is transient and geometry eternal. It should be remembered, however, that Hooke laid claim to some of the discoveries which Newton took entirely upon himself, and that he not only had many supporters in those claims, but Newton himself gave a species of warrant for them by refraining from publishing his treatise on "Optics" during the lifetime of Hooke. It is, however, a curious coincidence that, within the very year that Hooke died, Lord Somers retired from the presidency, and Newton (having never before been so much as upon the council of the society, although he had for five years held the eminent post of Master of the Mint) was unanimously elected into his place.

When Newton was elected a new era dawned upon the Royal Society: the genius of science was at last in his proper place. No more noble presidents who never attended a meeting, no more *rois faineants*, no more puerile questions to be solved, no more ridicule from without upon the proceedings which occupied the interior of the society; the most indifferent became interested, and the most ribald jester was awed when the greatest philosopher of that or any other age assumed the presidential chair. As Leigh Hunt says: "When Sir Isaac Newton became president jesting ceased." It is undeniable that from that moment the proceedings of the society acquired a graver character, and that thenceforth it was looked up to as the first scientific tribunal in the world.

Newton was sixty years old when he took office; but if the honour were tardy, it was some consolation that he enjoyed it during the twenty-four years that remained to him of life. Mr. Weld declares that the council-books show that during the whole of his presidency he presided at almost every meeting of the Fellows. The first act of his reign was to present the society with his treatise on *Optics*, which was first published in English, and afterwards translated into Latin by Dr. Samuel Clarke, the eminent divine and editor of Homer, for which Newton presented him with 500*l.* out of his own pocket. It was at that time that the notable quarrel between Newton and Flamsteed was blown up into a flame by the disputes about the publication of the *Historia Cælestis Britannica* by the latter. There can be no doubt that the Astronomer-Royal was jealous of the pre-eminence attained by his great rival; but a dispassionate consideration of the evidence leads us to fear that Newton himself was not without blame in the part which he took in the business. As is invariably the case when a quarrel of this magnitude takes place, there are partisans on each side ready to adopt in *toto* the acts and opinions of their respective heroes. The enthusiasm which is developed by dissensions in the scientific world is second only to that which is evolved by a religious controversy. Some of the disputants in this *cause célèbre* have gone very far. Sir Richard Phillips, in the volume which he miscalls "A Million of Facts," gives proof of such blindness to the transcendental merits of Newton as to reduce the value of his testimony to a negative quantity. As an example of how far prejudice can warp and distort the judgments of even a cultivated mind, the following *dicta* are curious if lamentable:—

"As Newton made no observations, he derived all he used from Flamsteed."

"Newton was flattered into publication [of the 'Principia'] by Halley."

"Flamsteed was a patient worker; Newton only a theorist."

Such statements are absolutely false; but what was to be expected from a man who could speak of "the execrable superstitions of Newton"?

Soon after the Society became a house of its notice, the Mercers' Gresham much p about for the house court, Fl chase w afterward matter w faction of accused society a the soci independ house w tion, had well fitte there unt was gran set Hou its new 1710. W Gresham mismana from whi long live acquired It was the poeti Bordes visit to i been esta to "Cran a Londr Gaul,

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Soon after the election of Newton, the Royal Society began to reanimate the question of having a house of its own. It was indeed forced upon its notice in a manner by an intimation from the Mercers' Guild, who had a control over Gresham College, that its room would be much preferred to its company. Casting about for accommodation, it was ascertained that the house of the late Dr. Brown, in Crane-court, Fleet-street, was for sale, and the purchase was at once determined upon, and soon afterwards effected for 1450*l*. Of course this matter was not concluded without some dissatisfaction on the part of certain malcontents, who accused Newton and Sloane of managing the society all their own way; but, in the end, the society found no reason to repent the independent step they had taken. This new house was in a retired and yet central position, had been built by Wren, and was very well fitted for their purposes. They remained there until 1782, when enlarged accommodation was granted to them by Government in Somerset House. The first meeting of the society in its new abode was on the 8th of November, 1710. When the Royal Society withdrew from Gresham College, Sir Thomas's benevolent but mismanaged institution fell into an insignificance from which it has never wholly recovered. It had long lived upon the borrowed lustre which it acquired from the Royal Society.

It was the house in Crane-court which excited the poetic fervour of a Frenchman, one Petro de Bordes de Borcheres, who happened to pay a visit to it some time after the Royal Society had been established there, and who addressed an ode to "Crane-court, ou le Nouveau Temple d'Apollon à Londres." *Scavans Oracles*, sang the inspired Gaul,

Scavans Oracles Britanniques
Pour vous, des Muses Nourissons,
Je brule de Feux Pyndariques,
Temperiez-les par vos Leçons.

The force of the compliment to the Scientific Muse is, however, somewhat deadened by the fact that, side by side with the ode to "Crane-court," the same poet indulged in a flight in favour of Mlle. Salle, the celebrated daughter of Terpsichore, who first introduced the ballet upon these chaste shores; and it must be confessed that the eloquent Petro appears much more at home in this subject than in the other:

L'attitude du corps charme, ravit, surprend,
Tous admirent son Port Modeste, noble et grand,
Sur son sein déconvert par la Toile légère,
Brille de la Pudeur le sacré caractère.

Only the other day we paid a visit to the little house in Crane-court, thus hallowed by the memory of Newton. The contrast between this humble abode and the splendid mansion in which the Royal Society is at present lodged is extraordinary. "The house of the late Dr. Brown" is now in the occupation of the trustees of the Scottish Hospital (who purchased it from the Royal Society in 1782), a worthy institution for relieving poverty and sickness among the Scotch residents of the metropolis. The room in which the Royal Society held its meetings is now the board-room of the trustees. Many changes have of course taken place; but the richly-moulded ceiling of that room is said to be the very one under which Newton sat. The aspect from the windows of the room is not very lively, and as the house is at the end of a Fleet-street court, there is little need to add that it is not particularly well illuminated. The ceiling is low, and twenty or thirty persons would crowd the apartment rather inconveniently.

As we have already stated, it was under the presidency of Newton that the society reached the crowning point of its influence and glory. In December 1710 Queen Anne addressed to it a warrant constituting the President and Council of the society visitors of the Greenwich Observatory. Old Mr. Flamsteed was very irate at this, which he deemed an impertinent interference, and attributed it to the hostile influence of Newton and Halley; but, when he went to Mr. Secretary St. John and remonstrated with him warmly upon the matter, that functionary answered haughtily that "the Queen would be obeyed." Next year the society investigated the claims of Leibnitz to Newton's discovery of Fluxions. The merits of this controversy are too well known to scientific persons to need recapitulation here, and to other readers they would scarcely be interesting. The general belief is, that Leibnitz's discovery was independent of Newton's; and, indeed, that whilst Newton was keeping his discovery to himself and his friends (probably until he had carried it still

further), Leibnitz had pushed it into a great and powerful system.

All this time the society was growing not only in importance, but in the extent of its property. Among other bequests, there is one of 500*l*. from Robert Keck, Esq., for the establishment of a foreign secretaryship. In 1724 the society petitioned George I. for licence to purchase lands in mortmain, and, after an opinion had been delivered by Attorney-General Yorke in favour of the society's prayer, it was granted. A large portion of the funds was devoted, in Sir Isaac Newton's time, to the encouragement of astronomical and meteorological observations both at home and abroad; the consequence was that the published *Transactions* of the society became the repository of almost every contribution to natural science.

During the earlier part of Newton's presidency (that is to say, in the year 1709) a clause in the will of one of the Fellows, Sir Godfrey Copley, became the occasion for one of those prizes within the gift of the Royal Society, which are now the cause of honourable envy and competition in the scientific world. This clause was as follows:—"One hundred pounds, in trust for the Royal Society of London, for improving natural knowledge, to be laid out in experiments, or otherwise for the benefit thereof, as they shall direct or appoint." This was the origin of "the Copley Medal," for, after using in the conduct of experiments the small sums accruing from the dividends of the "one hundred pounds" up to the year 1736, the society resolved to take advantage of the words "otherwise for the benefit thereof," and to lay out the money in a medal to be awarded "to the author of the most important scientific discovery, or contribution to science, by experiment or otherwise." The fate of this medal has been curious, and its history not uninteresting. Having regard to the very elastic and general terms in which the limits of competition were laid down, it is scarcely too much to say that almost all "the most important scientific discoveries or contributions to science" have been *denied* the reward of the medal. Mr. Weld informs us that "this medal, not unaptly termed by Sir Humphrey Davy 'the ancient olive-crown of the Royal Society,' has been awarded, for upwards of a hundred years, to the authors of brilliant discoveries; and there is hardly a name eminent in science that does not appear as the recipient of this honourable testimonial of appreciated merit." What, however, are the facts? The very year after the institution of the medal (1737) this "ancient olive crown" was placed upon the brow of Dr. John Belchier for the ingenuity which he had displayed in "dyeing the bones of living animals red with madder root!" From that time up to 1753 the only names in the list of Copley medal-men which are still of much account in the scientific world are those of Baker, the microscopist; Bradley, the astronomer; Harrison, who perfected the chronometer; and John Canton, the electrician. Yet, within that period, Robert Simson, of Glasgow, had restored the *Loci Plani* of Apollonius, and Linnaeus had raised *Botany* to the first rank among sciences. In 1753, however, some recognition was made of the fact that a foreigner might supply a contribution to science; for the Copley medal for that year was awarded to Benjamin Franklin for "curious experiments and observations on electricity." The most notable awards from that time up to the end of the century were to John Dollond, for his experiments on light (1758); Henry Cavendish, for experiments on fixed air (1766); Joseph Priestley, for experiments "on different kinds of air" (1773); Nevil Maskelyne, for observations on the attraction of mountains (1775); James Cook (the circumnavigator), for a "paper containing the method he had taken for preserving the health of the crew of H.M.S. the *Resolution*" (1776); William Herschel, for the "discovery of a new and singular star" (1781); John Hunter, for a paper on anatomy (1787); Count Rumford, for investigations as to the properties of heat (1792);*

* Count Rumford, though undoubtedly a very able man, was so much of a socialist that he did himself an injustice, and passed with many people for a charlatan. Among other curious inventions, he produced a cooking machine which was to effect great marvels. As Peter Pindar says, it was to

"Change old shoes to beef in half an hour;
And turn, amidst the wonders of the shop,
A tinker's apron to a mutton chop."

The Count was also accused of having invented the ingenious expedient of *steeping chimneys with a live goose*, which was to be tied to a string, and then forced to fly up the incumbered flue.

Alessandro Volta, for communication upon electricity (1794); Jesse Ramsden, for improvements in instrument making (1795); and George Attwood (the inventor of the well-known "Attwood's machine"), for communications on geometry (1796). Yet in 1767 Arkwright invented his spinning machine, and Hargreave the spinning-jenny; in 1768 Bruce had traced out one of the sources of the Nile, and in the same year Bougainville made his discoveries in the South Seas; in 1769 Watt took out his patent for the steam-engine; at the same time, D'Alembert had founded the *Encyclopédie* (the largest literary contribution ever made to science); Condorcet had published his mathematical works; Lavoisier had developed the theory of combustion; Dr. Black had made that magnificent discovery of *latent heat*, which so materially assisted Watt in his improvement of the steam-engine; Josiah Wedgewood had elevated the manufacture of pottery into an art; Montgolfier had constructed the first balloon (1783); De Saussure had made and published all his valuable "contributions to science" in the various departments of geology, chemistry, meteorology, and botany; Buffon had published his "Regne Animal," and had still more entitled himself to the gratitude of the Royal Society by his admirable translation of Newton's "Fluxions;" Immanuel Kant had produced his "Critique of Pure Reason;" Lagrange had laid bare the first principles of Mechanics; Mr. Murdoch, of Redruth, in Cornwall, had first applied coal-gas to purposes of illumination; Laplace had given to the world his "Mécanique Céleste;" Sennefelder had invented lithography; and the immortal Jenner had made the invaluable discovery of vaccination: probably also there had been many other important discoveries, which our imperfect memory does not enable us to recal; but it is sufficient for our present purpose to know that the Royal Society did not consider any of these to be "contributions to science" of sufficient importance to deserve "the ancient olive-crown" of its favour. It may be some consolation to know that Mr. William Brownrigg got the medal in 1766 for an "experimental inquiry into the mineral elastic spirit on air contained in Spa water," although our satisfaction might be considerably augmented if we had the slightest information as to who Mr. Brownrigg happened to be. It is also some compensation for the omission of the inventor of the steam-engine from the list that Mr. James Renell received the medal for a "paper on the rate of travelling as performed by camels." It may perhaps be urged in defence of the society that the invention of the steam-engine was a mere mechanical matter, and that, although the spinning-jenny *has* revolutionised half the world, it does not fall properly within the definition of a scientific discovery, but rather belonged to that class of inventions which it is now the province of the Society of Arts to recognise and reward. But in reply to this, we would point out that in 1759 John Smeaton (a name deserving of all honour) very properly received the Copley Medal for "curious experiments concerning water-wheels and windmill-sails." In the present century the awards of the Copley Medal have been somewhat more consistent with the spirit of the original definition, and in the list of medal-men we find the names of Wollaston, Humphrey Davy, Brande, Brewster, Oersted, Sabine, J. F. W. Herschel, Buckland, François Arago, Michael Faraday, Berzelius, Liebig, Le Verrier, Adams, Murchison, Owen, Humboldt, and Leon Foucault. Yet still we miss the discoverers of Ceres, Pallas, Juno and Vesta; neither do we find the names of Malus, who discovered the polarisation of light; of Jacquard, whose loom is a marvel of mechanical science; of Thomas Young, who enlarged the theory of light and discovered the key to the hieroglyphical alphabet; of George Stephenson, who was practically the inventor of locomotive travelling; of Daguerre, the discoverer of photography; of Crose, one of the greatest electricians that ever lived; of Wheatstone, the adapter of Oersted's theory to the practice of the electric telegraph; nor of Spencer, the discoverer of the electrotype. Yet we cannot but hold these to be among the greatest contributors to science of whom the century can boast. It may be, that it is impossible to exclude prejudice and cliques from any society, even when composed of such materials as those which go the making of the Royal Society; but we must confess that we should have been better pleased at having to point out the impartial jus-

tice with which every great "contribution to science" had been recognised, than to catalogue these grave and unaccountable sins of omission. In awarding the Copley Medal to M. Le Verrier, in 1846, the Royal Society committed itself to an opinion which it only half recanted by its award of 1848. The most prejudiced adherents of the French astronomer have never so much as pretended that the discovery by Adams was not altogether independent of the observations of any other person; whilst upon the mind of the dispassionate inquirer the weight of evidence leaves very little doubt that, but for the culpable and most unaccountable negligence of the Astronomer-Royal, the glory of that discovery would have been secured to our fellow-countryman beyond the possibility of question. Why then did the Royal Society pronounce so decidedly in favour of M. Le Verrier by granting its medal to him exclusively; when the Royal Astronomical Society, unable to pronounce absolutely upon the claims of either, granted a testimonial of honour to both, *simultaneously*? The only explanation which offers itself is that the Royal Society was unwilling to admit a claim which, for its perfect establishment, included a tacit condemnation of the negligence of the Astronomer Royal. But it is time that we retraced our steps to Sir Isaac Newton.

In the beginning of 1726 Newton fell ill of the agonising disease which killed him, and he died on the 20th of March in the same year. It says something for the respect paid in England to Nature's patent of nobility, that ere he was borne to his grave in Westminster Abbey he lay in state like a prince, and his pall was supported by the Lord High Chancellor, two Dukes, and three Earls, all Fellows of the Royal Society. Science perhaps would have been better pleased, if six of his brother philosophers had been in their places. But it is scarcely gracious to be capacious: an honour was intended, and an honour it was.

Newton died worth something more than 30,000*l.*; but, although he is said to have promised to bequeath a legacy to the society, for some reason or other he did not keep his word. The society, however, possesses some interesting relics of its great president; the autograph note directing a purchase of South-Sea Stock; one of the solar dials, which he cut in the wall of the Manor House of Woolthorpe, while he was a boy; three portraits of him, one by Jervas, another by D. C. Marchand, and the third by Vanderbank; the original mask taken from his face by Roubiliac immediately after death; and a veritable lock of the great philosopher's hair. Who can wonder that the Royal Society regards these as the most precious relics which it possesses?

It was fortunate for the Royal Society that it had Sir Hans Sloane to occupy Newton's vacant seat. Not that we would compare for one moment the intellectual capacity of the scientific Irish physician with that of the author of the "Principia"; and there can be no doubt that it would have been better for the society if it could have elected a president capable of keeping it up to those lofty altitudes of abstract science which Newton had indicated as its proper sphere; but at the same time it must be admitted that Sir Hans Sloane was a useful man in his generation. Ardent and intelligent in the pursuit of knowledge, and a man of very refined and noble character, Sloane was more likely than any other Fellow of the society to conciliate all tastes and to soften the regret naturally felt at the loss which had been sustained. He filled the office for fourteen years with credit to himself and profit to the society. Immediately after his appointment he introduced several important modifications in the constitution of the society. One was to the effect that the qualifications of a candidate should be laid before the members during ten ordinary meetings before he should go to ballot; but this was introduced side by side with a provision that "any peer, or son of a peer," should be eligible for the ballot on the same day whereon he was proposed. We regret to have to record that this exception still forms part of the statutes of the society. It must be confessed that Sloane was not altogether free from the taint of rank-worship. When the inoculation question was being debated he professed to have a high opinion of its merits. Queen Caroline was of the same opinion, and had caused "half a dozen of the charity children belonging to St. James's parish" to be operated upon. Satisfied with the result,

she requested Sloane to inoculate her own family; but the courtly physician "refused to advise her Majesty to put it in practice in her own family, as not being certain of the consequences that might follow, and on account of the great importance of the persons experimented upon to the public." Nevertheless Sloane made an excellent president, and, by his capacity for business matters, extricated the society from those pecuniary difficulties into which the negligence of its members had betrayed it. Towards the latter end of 1741 Sloane's declining health compelled him to resign, and he was succeeded in his office by Martin Folkes, Esq., who had long been vice-president. It is undeniable that in the appointment of this gentleman the society committed a grave mistake. Although "the friend of Newton," Mr. Folkes's tastes were archaeological and literary. Of science he knew little or nothing, and he was consequently utterly incapable of exercising that judicial discrimination which was necessary to preserve the proceedings of the society from ridicule. The consequences of this wrong step were speedily manifested in the inferior quality of the papers which appeared in the *Transactions*, and the attacks to which the society was speedily exposed. The most formidable of these was by that shrewd quack, Sir John Hill, whose animosity is said to have been excited by the refusal of the society to admit him as a Fellow. This worthy brought his talent as a journalist and a lampooner to bear upon what really was the soft side of both the society and of Mr. Folkes, and in his "Review of the Works of the Royal Society of London" he produced a burlesque upon the truth, which, considering the pregnant nature of the subject, must be regarded as a very common-place performance. Another lampoon directed against the absurd nature of some of these questions which occupied the attention of the society during Folkes's time was a pamphlet entitled "Some Papers proper to be read before the R—l Society concerning the Terrestrial Chrysippus. Collected by Petrus Gualterus, and Translated by P. H. I. Z." Thus Mr. George Cruikshank was anticipated by nearly a century. There is another production of the same sort, which appeared in 1750, in which poor Mr. Folkes is very roughly handled; it is entitled "A Dissertation on Royal Societies, in Three Letters from a Nobleman on his Travels to a person of distinction of Selavonia," and gives an account of two meetings, one of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, and the other of the Royal Society of London, in which the colouring is not very much in favour of the latter.

In 1742 the society lost Halley, who died in the eighty-sixth year of his age—"Astronomorum sui sæculi facile princeps." During the last twenty-two years of his life Halley held the post of Astronomer-Royal.

In 1743 the Royal Society Club was formed—a combination of certain of the members (not to exceed forty) for the purpose of dining together every Thursday: "Any nobleman or gentleman complimenting the society annually with venison, not less than a haunch, or with a turtle, shall be deemed an honorary member." When William Hanbury, Esq., presented the society with a chine of beef weighing 140 pounds, it was gravely determined (probably with a view to getting another) "that two such chines were equal to half a bucke or a turtle." Whether this fraternisation of *bon vivants* has done anything for the advancement of science we are not in a position to state (though we have heard it hinted that even in the present day the meetings of the society are much fuller upon "dinner days" than upon any other); but the Royal Society Club is not only still in existence, but flourishes. Its *cænaculum* is now the Freemasons' Tavern. So popular indeed has this institution proved, that, on it appearing that there were always more candidates for election than vacancies to be filled, another branch club of the same sort was established in 1847, under the title of "The Philosophical Club." This club is confined to Fellows of the society who are also the authors either of papers published in the *Transactions*, or "of some work of original research in natural science." The number is limited to forty-seven. This also is said to flourish, and combines philosophy with pudding in a manner worthy of Dr. Kitchener.

In 1752, when the change of style took place, and the Calendar of this country was assimilated with that adopted on the greater part of Europe, the Royal Society took a leading part in the

matter. Lord Macclesfield, in moving the second reading of the Bill in the House of Peers, expressly stated that it had been approved of by "Mr. Folkes, President of the Royal Society, and Dr. Bradley, his Majesty's Astronomer at Greenwich." The Bill itself was drawn up by Mr. Daval, an eminent barrister, and then secretary to the Royal Society. In 1752 it was resolved that the *Transactions*, which had up to that time been confided to single members as editors, should for the future be published under the superintendence of a committee. A volume is published every year, and the series now numbers altogether 146 volumes, forming one of the most valuable collections of scientific materials in existence. Folkes retired from the Presidency in 1753, and was succeeded by George Parker, Earl of Macclesfield, the very statesman who, in spite of popular clamour, had carried the reform of the Calendar. In 1756 the society took the unusual course of electing Benjamin Franklin a Fellow without any solicitation on his part; which was a very high compliment to his genius. This was some recognition, though tardy, of the merits of that high-minded philosopher, whose labours the Royal Society for a long time persisted in slighting. In 1761 that rare astronomical event, a transit of Venus, was expected; and, it being deemed requisite to have it properly observed, with a view of determining the Sun's distance from the earth, the Royal Society memorialised the Lords of the Treasury for a grant of money to enable to send out persons competent to make the observations. In answer to this appeal 1600*l.* was granted to defray the expenses of two expeditions, one to St. Helena, and the other to Bencoolen. Maskelyne was sent to St. Helena, and Messrs. Mason and Dixon to Bencoolen. Mr. Weld gives the Rev. Nevil Maskelyne's estimate of expenses, and it is a curious document; for "board" at St. Helena is estimated at six shillings per day, and "liquors" at *five*; the total amount for "liquors" in this estimate being 141*l.* 5*s.* Not bad for a reverend philosopher! Let it be remembered, however, that Maskelyne was an astronomical observer of the first order, of whom Delambre has admitted, that "he left the most complete set of observations that have been given to the world." Maskelyne's expedition was not very useful after all; for, owing to the cloudiness of the weather (or the liquors) he did not see anything of the phenomenon. Messrs. Mason and Dixon were little more successful. Frightened at the outset of their voyage by an engagement with a French frigate, they put back to Plymouth and flatly refused to proceed towards Bencoolen. A sharp remonstrance from the Council had, however, the effect of bringing them to their senses, if not of restoring their courage; and they took observations of the phenomenon from the Cape of Good Hope. Another transit of Venus happening in 1769, the society once more petitioned the Crown, and obtained a grant of 4000*l.* With this, they sent out Lieutenant Cook and Mr. Green to the Pacific. Messrs. Dymond and Wales to Hudson's Bay, and Mr. Call to Madras, and the results were in all cases satisfactory. There being a considerable surplus left after payment of expenses, the society devoted a portion of it to the bust of George the Third, executed by Nollekens, which is still in the possession of the society.

In 1764 the society lost a good friend in the Earl of Macclesfield, whose place was filled up by James, Earl of Morton, a nobleman of very scientific tastes, and one of the representative Peers for Scotland. He held the office for four years. The great event of his presidency was the expedition for the observation of the transit of Venus, in which he took the liveliest interest. The Lieutenant Cook who was dispatched to the Pacific was no other than the famous Captain Cook, whose name must ever be connected with the annals of British naval enterprise. This was the beginning of Cook's connection with the Royal Society, which endured to the day when he came to his untimely death. Sir Joseph Banks was of that party, and the future President of the Royal Society was attended by Dr. Solander the Swedish botanist, two draughtsmen, and four servants. It is possible that Cook thought this too much baggage, even for a rising *savon* with 30,000*l.* a year; for he never could be brought again to consent to having Banks with him in any of his voyages, a line of conduct which greatly excited the indignation of Banks. The expedition sailed in the Endeavour, and, as every reader of Cook's "Voyages" knows, was successful in every respect.

Upon the 1768, was elected meeting. In the Reports, and for Literary presidency of a next annual election before he had 1770 the from Dr. celebrated pence second Adventur superinte necessary liberally tion from cluded, t was another expedition than the naturalist mit Dr. astronom upon wh Longitud mirable p of the re tained? absurd p so richly that th sophy, at Joseph B curious a for quoti

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Upon the death of the Earl of Morton, in October 1768, Mr. (afterwards Sir James) Burrow was elected president until the next anniversary meeting. He is described by Mr. Weld as "an eminent lawyer, and Master of the Crown Office." In the literature of the law he is known for his *Reports*, and in general literature for his *Essay on Punctuation*, "*De usu et ratio interpungendi*," and for a pamphlet on "*The Question concerning Literary Property*." According to Mr. Weld, this presidency was only celebrated for the "absence of any remarkable circumstances." At the next anniversary meeting James West, Esq., was elected to the chair. This gentleman, who had before been treasurer to the society, appears to have had some archaeological attainments. In 1770 the society received the first communication from Dr. Priestley, who made John Canton, the celebrated electrician, the medium of his correspondence with the society. Next year, Cook's second expedition, in the *Resolution* and the *Adventure*, was organised under the immediate superintendence of the Council, everything necessary for scientific observation being most liberally provided for. This was the expedition from which Sir Joseph Banks was excluded, to his grievous disappointment. There was another circumstance in connection with this expedition, which was infinitely more disgraceful than the rejection of the wealthy amateur naturalist, and this was the refusal to permit Dr. Priestley to accompany it as its astronomer. Will it be believed that the grounds upon which certain members of the Board of Longitude opposed the appointment of this admirable philosopher were no other than because of the religious opinions which the latter entertained? Priestly himself characterised this absurd piece of bigotry in the way which it so richly merited: "I thought (said he) that this had been a business of philosophy, and not of divinity." The letter to Sir Joseph Banks in which this passage occurs is so curious and interesting that we make no apology for quoting it at full length.

Leeds, Dec. 10, 1771.

DEAR SIR.—After the letter which I received about a fortnight ago from Mr. Eden, who informed me that he wrote at your request, I cannot help saying that your's, and his, which I have now received, appear a little extraordinary. In the former letter, there was far from being the most distant hint of any objection to me, provided I would consent to accompany you. You now tell me that, as the different Professors of Oxford and Cambridge will have the naming of the person, and they are all clergymen, they may possibly have some scruples on the head of religion; and that on this account you do not think you could get me nominated at any rate, much less on the terms that were first mentioned to me. Now what I am, and what they are, with respect to religion, might easily have been known before the thing was proposed to me at all. Besides, I thought that this had been a business of philosophy, and not of divinity. If, however, this be the case, I shall hold the Board of Longitude in extreme contempt, and make no scruple in speaking of them accordingly, taking it for granted that you have just ground for your suspicions. I most sincerely wish you a happy voyage, as I doubt not it will be greatly to the emolument of science; but I am surprised that the persons who have the chief influence in this expedition, having (according to your representation) minds so despicably illiberal, should give any countenance to so noble an undertaking. I am truly sorry that a person of your disposition should be subject to a choice restricted by such narrow considerations.—I am, &c.

J. PRIESTLEY.

When Cook returned in 1772, having circumnavigated the globe in three years and eighteen days, and having only lost four men during that extraordinary voyage, of whom one only fell a victim to sickness, the society awarded to him the Copley Medal. Sir John Pringle had then succeeded to the presidency, upon the death of West. This man was partly a moral philosopher and partly a physician; but for what reason he was elected president of the Royal Society, except that he was physician extraordinary to Queen Charlotte, is not easily discovered. One of the most remarkable events of his presidency was the tardy recognition of Priestley's genius, by awarding to him the Copley Medal. About the same time too it was that the Royal Society first turned its attention to the subject of a North-West Passage. In consequence of an application which the society made to the Crown, the expedition of Phipps and Lutwidge (in the *Racehorse* and *Carcass*) was fitted out, but did not get beyond 80° 48' north latitude; and in 1776 (doubtless inspired by the

same influence) Government offered a reward of 20,000*l.* "to the ships of any of his Majesty's subjects, or the commanders, officers, and seamen of such ships as belonged to his Majesty, who should find out and sail through any passage by sea between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, in any direction or parallel of the northern hemisphere to the northward of the 52nd degree of north latitude." Cook accepted the challenge, and it was during that voyage that he fell on the shore of Hawaii. We do not know whether any attempt has been made to claim the 20,000*l.* on behalf of Captain McClure and his crew; but, if so, they are clearly not entitled to the reward, which is to be paid to those only who sail through such a passage, a feat which has certainly never yet been accomplished. During the presidency of Sir John Pringle the important experiments for ascertaining the density of the earth were conducted by Maskelyne, under the auspices of the society. During the same presidency the Bakerian Lecture was instituted, in consequence of a bequest of 100*l.* by the will of Henry Baker, Esq., the microscopist: "For an oration or discourse to be spoken or read yearly by some one of the Fellows of the Society, on such part of natural history or experimental philosophy" as the President and Council should appoint. A lectureship had already been founded, at a much earlier period, under rather peculiar circumstances. In 1684 a certain Dr. Croone, one of the original members of the society, died, and in his will was found the plan of two lectureships which he designed to establish, in connection with the Royal Society and the College of Physicians. These lectures were to be upon the laws of muscular motion. The good doctor, however, with all his anxiety to immortalise himself through the medium of these lectures, had omitted one rather important matter—he had not made the smallest provision for the foundation; and it is just possible that this little oversight might have frustrated his intention, had it not been for the liberality of his widow, who survived him many years, and indeed consoled herself for her loss by taking a second husband, and in whose will a very ample provision was found for carrying Dr. Croone's intention into effect. One fifth of the clear rent of the King's Head Tavern, in or near Old Fish-street, was left for this purpose. The lecture is now delivered annually, by some one of the many eminent physiologists who are Fellows of the Royal Society; and it is called "the Croonian Lecture" after its worthy founder, and, as in accordance with the founder's plan it must be accompanied by experiment, the evening selected for its delivery is generally speaking one of the most interesting and numerously attended during the season. About this time also the name of John Hunter (the Newton of anatomy) began to appear as a constant contributor to the *Transactions* of the Society. It was whilst Sir John Pringle was president that the curious squabble about round and pointed lightning-conductors arose; wherein Benjamin Wilson espoused the cause of the round, against Benjamin Franklin and the supporters of the pointed. Subsequent experience has ratified the opinion of the latter; but it is difficult for us, at this distance of time, to understand the energy which was displayed in the quarrel. The war then raging between England and America was dragged into the matter by Wilson and his friends, because Franklin, the inventor of pointed conductors, was an American, and George the Third, the most patriotic and obtuse of kings, was so far influenced by that circumstance as to give in his adhesion to the round knobs. An anecdote is told, which is very honourable to Sir John Pringle, that when the King endeavoured to persuade him to join that side, he replied: "Sir, I cannot reverse the laws and operations of nature." It has been stated that when Sir John made this sensible reply the King rejoined, "Perhaps, Sir John, you had better resign;" which, if true, is a new proof of the wise and intelligent patronage which literature and science then received at the hands of the House of Hanover. With all their faults, the Stuarts were all artists and scholars.

The foolish part which George III. took in the matter, was the occasion of the following very witty letter from the pen of Benjamin Franklin:—

SIR.—I am much obliged by your communication of the letter from England. I am of your opinion, that it is not proper for publication here. Our friends' expressions concerning Mr. Wilson will be thought too angry to be made use of by one philosopher, when speaking of another, and on a philosophical question.

He seems as much heated about this one point, as the Jansenists and Molenists were about the *five*. As to my writing anything on the subject which you seem to desire, I think it is not necessary, especially as I have already expressed my opinion upon it, in a paper read to the committee, who ordered the conductors at Purfleet; which paper is printed in the last French edition of my writings.

"I have never entered into any controversy in defence of my philosophical opinions; I leave them to take their chance in the world. If they are right, truth and experience will support them; if wrong, they ought to be refuted and rejected. Disputes are apt to sour one's temper, and disturb one's quiet. I have no private interest in the reception of my inventions by the world, having never made, nor proposed to make, the least profit by any of them. The King's changing his pointed conductors to blunt ones is, therefore, a matter of small importance to me. If I had a wish about it, it would be, that he had rejected them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of Heaven, that he dared to use his own thunder in destroying his innocent subjects. I am, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

But, whether he did or did not resign from this cause, certain is it that in the year 1777 Sir John Pringle did resign, and was succeeded by Sir Joseph Banks, who cared little whether the conductors were round or pointed, so that he was conducted to the presidential chair of the Royal Society. Posterity has to some extent done justice to the memory of this overrated man. Banks was not so much a natural philosopher as a collector of objects illustrative of natural history. With the exception of Sir Hans Sloane, he was perhaps the most zealous collector that ever was in England; but he never made his mark in science by any one discovery of importance. He had an acquisitive and an inquisitive, but not an analytical mind. He had a mania for collecting, which was made use of humorously enough by that sad dog Peter Pindar. He dabbled in every branch of natural history, and when he had got together a number of stuffed crocodiles, Emperor of Morocco butterflies, and curiosities from all parts of the world, he fancied that he had become a great naturalist. This, however, was a great mistake. His wealth (which was considerable) enabled him to indulge in his collecting mania; and such was the amiability of his private character that his friends, who must have known better, were content to humour him in this whim of his whole life; and so it was "Sir Joseph this," and "Sir Joseph that," when any matter of science was agog to the end of the chapter. Mr. Weld is quite right when he terms him "this patron of science," which is indeed his proper designation. But if it is to the President of the Royal Society that the scientific world has to look for some directing and controlling influence, then it is a fact no less ludicrous than lamentable that "Sir Joseph's carriage stopped the way" for very nearly half a century. As for the immediate influence which he exercised over some of the Fellows, it is to be feared that it was not altogether disconnected from the tea-parties and dinner-parties which he was accustomed so liberally to bestow. Sir Joseph's amusing persecutor, Peter Pindar, hinted at this when he makes him confess that

Venison's a Caesar in the fiercest fray;
Turtle, an Alexander in its way;
And then, in quarrels of a slighter nature,
Mutton's a most successful mediator.

But Peter is perhaps scarcely a fair witness as to the character of Sir Joseph, of whom elsewhere he says:

That, though Sir Joseph is not deep discerning,
And though, as all the world well knows,
A nut-shell might with perfect ease enclose
Three quarters of his sense and all his learning.

And, after all, what did Sir Joseph do for the society which had set him up as an idol for forty-one years? Out of an estate worth at least 30,000*l.* a year he did not leave it a penny. Of all his possessions it possesses one single relic, of which Mr. Weld relates a very amusing anecdote. After Sir Joseph's death, it was found that a very delicately-constructed balance, by Ramsden, which belonged to the late President, was lying in the apartments of the society; whereupon the secretary wrote to the widow, requesting instructions as to the disposal of it. "Oh, pay it into Coutts's!" was the reply of the good lady.

It must not be supposed, however, that during the whole of his long reign Sir Joseph was free from those troubles which are incident to even the easiest thrones—by the way, it is gravely asserted that Sir Joseph was once very anxious that a real throne should be provided for the

President of the Royal Society, and was only dissuaded from the notion after much persuasion. His was not always an easy seat. It is true that the ministerial party, who partook of the tea and toast of Soho-square, supported their patron through thick and thin; but then there was always a sour, crabbed opposition, whom not even turtle and venison could mollify. One of the most pregnant sources of discontent was the liberty which Sir Joseph assumed of putting a veto upon any candidate of whom he did not approve. It was alleged against him that he excluded Mr. Clarke, of Manchester (an excellent mathematician), on the ground that "he was a schoolmaster, and a very low man." His introduction of thrones into the meeting-room, for the accommodation of royal personages, called forth a pamphlet, in which the aristocratically-minded President is thus sharply rebuked:

Whatever may be this man's or that man's opinion of the utility of honorary distinctions and the respect due to them (and where shall opinions of that kind be free, if not among the members of a philosophical assembly?) it is, we think, pretty well agreed on, that every man leaves his rank at the door of the Royal Society, except with regard to the bare object of civility; just as every man leaves his sword at the door of some other peaceable assemblies.

It was immediately after the election of Sir Joseph, that an offer was made on the part of Government to give accommodation to the Society in Somerset House, then recently rebuilt by Sir William Chambers. In accepting this offer, it is not easy to determine whether the Society was a gainer or a loser. It was certainly lodged in a finer house, but to some extent it lost some of its independence. One of the earliest proofs of this lies in the complaint which they addressed to Sir William Chambers, even before their removal, as to the insufficiency of the accommodation and the inconvenience of making them share some apartments with the Antiquarian Society. These matters were partly alleviated; but the space in the new rooms was still so insufficient that the society was compelled to get rid of its museum, which then contained of some very fine collections. Considering, however, the restricted space at their disposal and the impossibility of getting accommodation for any increase in the collections—feeling also that the great national repository of the British Museum, then first rising in importance, must necessarily put into the shade all similar collections which were not of a special nature—it was resolved to divide the contents of their own Museum between the British Museum and Surgeon's Hall: the greater proportion of course going to the former institution.

The Royal Society met for the first time in its new abode on the 1st of May 1780, Sir Joseph improving the occasion with an oration—composed in that style for which there is but one descriptive word in the language, and that word borrowed from the Persian—congratulating the Fellows upon the liberality of a monarch who had placed them "in every point of splendid accommodation as much above all foreign academies, as the labours of their learned predecessors had raised them in literary reputation." In the following year (1781) Sir William Herschel, one of the Fellows, discovered the planet Uranus, once called *Georgium Sidus*—in allusion, we presume, to the brilliancy of its royal godfather. As an acknowledgment of this, the society did Herschel the honour to award to him the Copley Medal, for what they define oddly enough in their books "the discovery of a new and singular star." To this definition we have but three objections to make: firstly, that it was not a star, but a planet that was discovered; secondly, that it is not singular, but one among many; and thirdly, that it could not be said to be new, seeing that it is probably at least as old as the world upon which we live; but with these three exceptions (as Cuvier said of the famous description of the Crab) the definition is a very good one.

It was in the year 1783 that the extremely injudicious and overbearing conduct of Sir Joseph Banks brought the discontent which was widely spread among the members to a crisis. A certain Dr. Charles Hutton had been appointed foreign secretary; and, some complaints having been made as to the way in which the duties of that office were performed, Sir Joseph Banks manifested the most decided hostility to Hutton. The result of this was that a regular quarrel arose, some of the members siding with the offended foreign secretary, and the adherents of Sir Joseph of course remaining faithful to their hospitable

Mæcenas. Among those who took part against Sir Joseph was Mr. Maty, then the secretary, who wrote a pamphlet entitled "An Authentic Narrative of the Dissensions and the Debates in the Royal Society." At last, after an open rupture between the Secretary and the President, the former resigned his office. Mr. Weld, whose view of Sir Joseph's character appears to be rather favourable than otherwise to the departed President, adduces some curious testimony as to the manner in which he exercised his sway. There is a letter by Sir Benjamin Brodie, who must have known Banks intimately, in which is a strange story which certainly does not tell well for the President: "Sir Everard Home wished to propose Dr. Vaughan (who was then in very large practice as a metropolitan physician) as a Fellow of the Society, but Sir Joseph would not agree to it. He said he would not allow a gentleman to be qualified for admission into the society merely because he was a fashionable physician. After some years Dr. Vaughan inherited a fortune, and became Sir Henry Hallford. Sir Joseph then said that he might now be admitted as belonging to the other class." This "other class" referred to a preceding passage in the letter which explained that "the view which Sir Joseph Banks took of the construction of the Royal Society was, that it shall consist of two classes—the working men of science, and those who, from their position in science or fortune, it might be desirable to retain as persons of science."

But, to pass from those petty squabbles, which could have no other effect than that of lowering the tone of the society and bringing it into contempt, the year 1784 is remarkable for matters of far higher importance; for it was in that year that the important discovery of the composition of water was first made known to the society. This discovery is very generally assigned to Cavendish; but there is a very grave dispute as to whom the merit is justly attributable, some giving it to Cavendish and some to Watt. At any rate, the society must have considered it an open question at the time; for, important as the discovery unquestionably was, the Copley Medal was not awarded to any one in respect of it. Watt himself distinctly accused Cavendish of plagiarism; and we have the opinion of such an eminent man as Brande in support of Watt's claim to priority of invention. The most eminent foreign chemists, with the exception of Lavoisier, agree in attributing the discovery solely to Watt. On the other hand, the believers in Cavendish can console themselves with the oracular dictum of Dr. Whewell, who has authoritatively declared that "Watt not only did not anticipate, but did not fully appreciate, the discovery of Cavendish and Lavoisier." The worst feature about this controversy is, that there is good ground for supposing that an attempt was made to bolster up Cavendish's case by the subsequent interpolation of a passage into a paper which he read to the society in January 1784. According to this passage, Cavendish made his experiments in 1781, and mentioned them to Dr. Priestley; but from fac similes which Mr. Weld has given, there cannot be much doubt that it was Dr. Blagden, then the secretary to the society, and not Cavendish, who interpolated the passage, and the fact of this forgery cannot but induce a suspicion as to the *bona fides* of the conduct adopted by the supporters of Cavendish.

Another matter of great scientific importance was set on foot in 1784. The Council had petitioned the Crown for funds to enable them to conduct a geometrical survey, "with the immediate object of establishing a trigonometrical connection between the observatories of Paris and Greenwich, in order to determine the difference of longitude." The requisite means having been furnished, Major-General Roy commenced operations by measuring a base line of 27,404 feet upon Hounslow Heath. Ramsden, the celebrated instrument-maker, constructed for this purpose a theodolite, "having a horizontal circle of three feet in diameter, and carrying telescopes of 36 inches focal length." The construction of this instrument delayed the matter for three years; but the triangulation commenced on the 31st of July 1787, and was completed before the end of the year with such accuracy, that when a base of verification of 28,335 feet was measured on Romney Marsh, the difference between the measured length, and the length computed from the Hounslow Heath base, through the series of triangles, was found to be only 28 inches. So satisfactory to the society were the results thus

obtained by General Roy, that the Copley Medal was awarded to him, accompanied by an expression of patronising approbation from Sir Joseph Banks.

In 1785 the society obtained a grant to enable Sir William Herschel to construct his colossal forty-feet reflecting telescope. Mr. Weld quotes from the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1795 Sir William's own account of how this monstrous stethoscope of the skies was made. According to this it was not finally completed before August 1789. The total cost of the instrument was 4000*l*. As everybody is well aware, Lord Rosse's splendid telescope has left this one far in the background; but, remembering how much mechanical art has done towards rendering easier the task of the instrument-maker, we cannot abate our respect for the ingenuity and perseverance with which Herschel combated and overcame every difficulty himself. Lord Rosse's splendid instrument still rears its giant form against the heavens, like a cannon destined to make a breach in the great mystery of the Infinite; but the telescope of Herschel now lies prone upon the ground, a ruin, or, as Sir John Herschel has expressed it in some quaint verses upon the subject, which Mr. Weld gives at length—

He hath stretched him quietly down at length
To bask in the starlight his giant strength;
And Time shall here a rough moral find
For his steel-devouring teeth to grind.

For the benefit of those who were not previously aware that the great astronomer occasionally penned a stanza, we subjoin the production in its entirety:—

THE HERSCHELIAN TELESCOPE SONG.

Requiem of the Forty-feet Reflector, at Slough, to be sung on the New Year's Eve, 1839—10, by Papa, Mama, Madama, and all the Little Bodies in the tube thereof assembled:

In the old Telescope's tube we sit,
And the shades of the past around us flit;
His requiem sing we, with shout and with din,
While the old year goes out, and the new one comes in.

Chorus of youths and virgins.
Merrily, merrily, let us all sing,
And make the old telescope rattle and ring.

Full fifty years did he laugh at the storm,
And the blast could not shake his unjust form;
Now prone he lies, where he once stood high,
And search'd the deep heavens with his bland bright eye.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
There are wonders no living sight has seen,
Which within this hollow have pictured been;
Which mortal record can ne'er recall,
And are known to Him only who makes them all.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
Here watched our father the wintry night,
And his gaze hath been fed with pre-Adamite light;
While planets above him, in circular dance,
Sent down on his toils a propitious glance.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
He has stretched him quietly down at length
To bask in the star-light his giant strength;
And Time shall here a rough moral find,
For his steel-devouring teeth to grind.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
He will grind it at last, as grind it he must,
And its brass and its iron shall be clay and dust;
But soulless rays shall roll away,
And nature its frame in its form's decay.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
A new year dawns, and the old year's past,
God send us a happy one, like the last;
A little more sun, and a little less rain,
To save us from cough and rheumatic pain.

Merrily, merrily, &c.
God grant that its end this group may find
In love and in harmony fondly joined;
And that some of us, fifty years hence, once more
May make the old Telescope's echoes roar.

Chorus fortissimo.

*Merrily, merrily, let us all sing,
And make the old Telescope rattle and ring.*

Sir William and Sir John were not the only members of the Herschel family whose names appear in the annals of the Royal Society. In 1786 Miss Caroline Herschel communicated a memoir announcing her discovery of a comet; and in 1795 the same lady made out the comet now known under the denomination of *Encke's Comet*. And this reminds us of what is really a blot upon the fair escutcheon of the Royal Society—the insensibility which it exhibits to the rights of the fairer portion of Creation. In vain has Mrs. Somerville bent her aching brows over the most abstruse questions of mathematics; in vain has Miss Martineau probed many mysteries with an astuteness quite, if not more than, manly; in vain have many other ladies sacrificed their natural position in the social scale for the advancement of human knowledge; it is all in vain—the Royal Society turns a deaf ear to their claims and denies them the hand of Fellowship. At this moment the *sanctum sanctorum* of science is as impervious to them as the most rigidly-tiled lodge of Free-

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mansons. And why should this be so? Far be it from us to recommend a promiscuous admission of fair dabblers in science into the society; let it not be for a moment imagined that we should call the possessor of an aquarium "an eminent physiologist," or the cultivator of a Wardian case "a person celebrated for her acquaintance with the science of botany." Only we contend that such a person as Mrs. Somerville would make at least as creditable a Fellow as many gentlemen whose names stand even now upon the roll of the society. 'Tis true that some inconvenience might arise, and it would be awkward indeed if gallantry were to find its way as an element in a scientific controversy; but, as ladies who devote themselves to such pursuits do not usually inspire feelings of a tender nature, and as science, like devotion, is mostly resorted to when the bright season is past, even that contingency may be regarded as too remote to cause any serious alarm. Nay, even the possibility of getting a Lady President does not appear so very appalling; for it can scarcely be denied that there are many old ladies, to whom age has brought wisdom, who would fill it at least quite as creditably as did Sir Joseph Banks.

To return, however, to that worthy. We find him in 1789 congratulating the society that the Prince of Wales had done him the high honour "to dispense with the formalities that have been adopted on similar occasions," by commanding him to attend at Carlton House with the Charter Book; in other words, instead of "the true Prince" going to the Royal Society (as the custom was), the society abased itself in the person of its President by waiting upon "the true Prince." In 1798 Volta did the society the honour to select it as the body to which he first communicated his discoveries on the effect of electricity upon the muscles, and received in return the Copley Medal. It is stated in explanation of this fact that the Italian philosopher had already visited England, and was intimately acquainted with Sir Joseph Banks and other Fellows of the Royal Society. The next year is noted in the annals of the society for the bequest made to it by Sir Clifton Wintringham, which was the subject of so much litigation before the intentions of the benevolent testator could be realised. Sir Clifton Wintringham, who had been a very eminent physician, left twelve hundred pounds in the Three per Cent. Consols, the dividends of which were to be applied in the following manner: three subjects in Natural Philosophy, including Chemistry, were to be chosen every year, and proposed in writing for an experimental examination; and a prize of a silver cup, gilt in the inside, of the value of thirty pounds, was to be awarded to the author of the most successful experimental examination. According to the will of the testator the bequest was not to take effect until after the death of his wife, should she survive him, and this was the cause of the vexatious delay which occurred. Lady Wintringham died intestate in 1805, and her administrator neglected to pay over the sum bequeathed to the Royal Society. It is difficult to understand why the officers of the society did not make application for the same; at any rate they did not, and it was only in 1839, after the death of the administrator, and when his solicitors made inquiry into the matter, that the nonpayment of the legacy was discovered. But now a new claimant came into the field. Sir Clifton Wintringham had added to the bequest a clause containing a gift over to the Foundling Hospital in the event of there being no experiments; and upon the ground of this clause the governors of the latter institution strove to take advantage of the *laches* committed by the Royal Society, and claimed the whole amount. Upon this question a Chancery suit was commenced, which was not finally settled until 1842, and then only by a compromise; so that after all, when costs had been paid and the lawyers satisfied, the Wintringham Fund came to the Royal Society in a rather dilapidated condition.

Another important endowment, which happened about this time, was that made by Count Rumford. This able and eccentric man (whose peculiarities have been already referred to) presented 1000*l.* to the society, the interest of which was to be applied every second year in rewarding the most important discovery on heat or light, the preference to be given to such discoveries as should, in the opinion of the President and Council, tend most to promote the good of mankind. The donation was to be given in the

form of two medals, one of gold and the other of silver. Accumulations arising from the non-awarding of the medals were to be invested, and the interest given as an addition to the medals. The Rumford medal is therefore intrinsically the most valuable prize which it is in the power of the society to bestow. In consequence of accumulations, the prize now consists of the two medals, one worth 60*l.* and the other 4*l.*, and a balance of money amounting to about 80*l.* Owing to the restricted nature of the ground of competition, the Rumford medal does not perhaps possess the honorary value of the Copley medal; but the list of medal-men contains some good names nevertheless. The first award (1800) was made, and deservedly so, to the founder himself, for his "various discoveries respecting light and heat." Since that time there have been only seventeen awards, and among them we find Sir Humphrey Davy (1816), for his "Essay on Dew; Sir David Brewster (1818), for discoveries relating to the polarisation of light; Fresnel (1824), for the development of the undulatory theory, as applied to the phenomena of polarised light, and for important discoveries in physical optics; Henry Fox Talbot (1842), for discoveries and improvements in photography; Michael Faraday (1846), for the discovery of the optical phenomena developed by the action of magnets and electric currents in certain transparent media; and among the later medal-men we find the names of F. Arago (1850), G. G. Stokes (1851), Dr. Neil Arnott (1854), and M. L. Pasteur (1856). From this it will be seen that in the distribution of the Rumford medals a liberal cosmopolitan spirit has been suffered to prevail, for in the list of medal-men there are almost as many foreigners as there are Englishmen. The design of the Rumford medal is a tripod with flames, and the motto (from Lucretius), *Noscere quæ vis et causa*, and on the reverse a wreath of laurels around the following inscription:—*Premium optime merenti ex instituto Benj. A. Rumford, S. R. I. Comitibus adjudicatum a Reg. Soc. Lond.*

The other medals in the disposal of the society, the Royal medals, were founded by George the Fourth in 1825, during the presidency of Sir Humphrey Davy. The royal pleasure in the matter was expressed by a letter addressed to the President by the late Sir Robert, then Mr. Peel, proposing to found "two gold medals of the value of fifty guineas each, to be awarded as honorary premiums, under the direction of the President and Council, in such manner as shall, by the excitement of competition among men of science, seem best calculated to promote the objects for which the Royal Society was instituted." The resolution of council, passed in accordance with this proposal, was to the effect that the medals should be awarded "for the most important discoveries, or series of investigations, completed and made known to the Royal Society." We are afraid that the italicised words have the effect of keeping the medals rather too much within the pale of the society. Owing to some delay on the part of Mr. Chantrey, to whom was entrusted the task of designing the medals, the dies were not completed before 1833, although the medals were regularly adjudicated every year. It is satisfactory, however, to know that when the dies were really completed by Mr. Wyon, all the medals due were delivered to the gentlemen to whom they had been awarded. The first name on the list of Royal medal-men is John Dalton (1826), for his "Development of the Atomic Theory;" and further on will be found Humphrey Davy, Encke, Wollaston, Charles Bell, David Brewster, De Candolle, J. W. F. Herschel, Lyell, Faraday, Whewell, Wheatstone, Airy, Owen, Brodie, Lord Rosse, Hooker, Hind, and Thomson. The only instance, we believe, of a year wherein only one paper was deemed worthy of the Royal medal is that of 1853, when Mr. C. Darwin alone obtained the prize, and the other was not "awarded." The regulations for restricting the limits of competition have been changed since the institution of the medal; and we believe the plan now is to divide subjects into a triennial cycle, as follows:

1. Astronomy; Physiology, including the Natural History of Organised Beings.
2. Physics; Geology or Mineralogy.
3. Mathematics; Chemistry.

The medal now delivered bears on the one side the head of her Most Gracious Majesty, with a Latin inscription, stating her to be the patron of the Royal Society, and on the other a full-length statue of Newton, with a mathematical diagram

on either side; that on the right hand being from the sixty-sixth Proposition of the "Principia," embodying the first idea of perturbing forces, and that on the left representing the solar system. On the upper hemicycle is inscribed, "Reginæ Munificentia Arbitrio Societatis."

It is time, however, that we returned to our historical sketch of the society. In 1798, Cavendish communicated his interesting experiments with the torsion rod for determining the density of the earth, which formed the foundation of the more perfect and conclusive experiments conducted by Baily. The opening of the nineteenth century was marked by the establishment of the Royal Institution in Albemarle street, which has been termed "the workshop of the Royal Society." It is true that there is now no connection whatsoever between the two societies; but it is also true (as Mr. Weld asserts) that the Royal Institution "owes its origin to Fellows of the Royal Society." The time when Hooke and other curators conducted actual experiments at the meetings of the society has past. It is thought more consistent with the dignity of eminent scientific men, who have long passed the rudiments of knowledge, to confine their attention to speculations of an abstract nature. To render science interesting, and therefore popular, is by some thought to degrade her; consequently, it is not often that the papers read before the Royal Society are enlivened by experiment. But there can be no doubt that occasionally, and especially in the time of Sir Humphrey Davy, the speculative Royal Society has greatly profited by the labours of the more practical Royal Institution. In the course of these memoirs it will be our duty to give an account of the origin of this institution; but in the mean time it is sufficient to record that (according to Mr. Faraday) it was organised at a meeting held at the house of Sir Joseph Banks.

Very early in the century, that is to say in the year 1802, the Government of the day requested the Royal Society to inquire into the causes which led to the explosion of the gas-works in Westminster, which had only just been established. Very little was known at that period about the use of gas. We have been assured by a person who well remembers those times, that he once attended a public lecture which was given to prove that a system of supplying gas by means of pipes underground must inevitably end in a terrible explosion. An apparatus was arranged, filled with gas, and exploded, to the perfect conviction and unmitigated terror of the spectators. But that this error was not confined to the simple and unscientific is evident, from the report returned by the committee appointed to examine into the accident. This report, which not only bears the name of Sir Joseph, but is also signed by such really eminent men as Colonel Congreve, Mr. Kennie, Dr. Wollaston, and Dr. Young, stated that, "if gas-lighting was to become prevalent, the gas-works ought to be placed at a considerable distance from all buildings, and that their reservoirs, or gasometers, should be small and numerous; and always separated from each other by mounds of earth or strong party-walls." It is a curious instance of how completely opinion has changed upon this point, that the gentleman above alluded to, happening ten years afterwards to drop into a lecture-room, found the very savan who had before supported the *explosibility* of gas, most successfully proving, both by argument and experiment, that it was impossible to explode coal-gas without a certain admixture of atmospheric air.

In 1804 Dr. Thomas Young was appointed Foreign Secretary to the society—a philosopher of the first order, whose labours shed a light upon many dark corners of natural science, and whose name is fit to be ranked beside that of Hooke. It was to Thomas Young that we are indebted for the Undulatory Theory of Light; for, although he only revived a theory which had been started by Hooke and Huyghens, he carried it much farther than they had ever anticipated.

Dr. Young was appointed Secretary to the Board of Longitude in 1818, an office which he continued to fill with great credit to himself and advantage to the cause of science. It has been objected to the labours of this great man that had they been less extensive, and had covered a smaller surface, they would have been more valuable; and a regret has been expressed that

his brilliant abilities were "wasted in professional authorship." A letter from himself to a friend is quoted in support of this: "I shall be most happy (wrote he) to receive from you at all times any account of your interesting investigations; but do not send me any information you are not prepared to have mentioned again, for I am always scribbling something anonymous, and I am very capable of introducing your experiments, where perhaps you would not wish them to appear—but I cannot help it. I can only give you fair warning. I have, indeed, very lately been entering into some optical subjects pretty much at large; but I do not think I shall resume the consideration of them for a long time." We fear there is some truth in the belief that "scribbling something anonymous" is incompatible with the habit of quiet and patient thinking, without which, the higher mental efforts are impossible; but at the same time there is a meaning in poor Young's words, "I cannot help it." His circumstances were never very good, and it is to be feared that when he wrote that he could not help it

It was about this time that many minor societies, founded for the purpose of advancing separate branches of science, began to appear. Some of these arose out of the Royal Society, and some were entirely independent of it. But the fact that any one independent society took its origin directly out of a corporation so jealous of its ancient privileges and long unquestioned supremacy as the Royal Society, is a sufficient proof that the impossibility of bringing all the sciences within the limits of a single society, however numerous or eminent, began to be fully recognised. The Animal Chemistry Society was founded under the auspices of Sir Joseph Banks; but that did not long survive its great mover, Sir Everard Home. The Geological Society was founded in 1807, and the Royal Medical in 1805. The great body of the learned societies did not come into existence until some twenty or twenty-five years later; but the impulse was evidently given. With reference to the Geological Society, it is a curious fact that at the time of its foundation the Royal Society exhibited so much jealousy of it as to endeavour to make it a species of tributary society to itself. The members of the Geological Society, however, determined to preserve an independent position, and passed a resolution declaring that any proposition tending to render their society dependent upon or subservient to any other society did not correspond with the conception which they entertained of the original principles of their foundation.

In 1816 the Secretary of State addressed a letter to the Council of the Royal Society, requesting them to assist in ascertaining the length of a pendulum vibrating seconds of time in the latitude of London, and other facts connected with the standard of measure. This is a subject which still continues to occupy the deepest attention of geometers; and it so happens that at the meeting of the Royal Society next after the appearance of this Memoir, the Astronomer Royal will read a paper in connection with this matter. In accordance with the request then made to them, the society appointed a committee to determine the best means of making the experiments. If there be any who feel surprise at finding the Secretary of State busying himself about such matters, it will be only necessary to point out the immense importance it is to trade to have an unerring standard of the natural measure. The investigations of the Royal Society at that time do not appear to have resulted in much; only in the year 1814, a Committee of the House of Commons having undertaken to settle the matter, and having for that purpose examined Professor Playfair and Dr. Wollaston, it was determined that the length of a pendulum vibrating seconds of time in the latitude of London was 39.13047 inches, of which the standard yard contained thirty-six—an estimate which has not been confirmed by subsequent experiment; for in 1820 another report was drawn up, declaring the length of the pendulum vibrating seconds at the level of the sea in London, and at 62° of Fahrenheit, to be 39.13929. The results of this were the Act of Parliament of 1824 and the standard yard, which was placed in the custody of the Clerk of the House of Commons. When this standard unit of measure was destroyed, with the House itself, in 1834, it of course became necessary to construct a new one, and a commission, consisting entirely of Fellows

of the Royal Society, was appointed to consider the steps requisite to be taken.

In 1817 we find the Royal Society once more turning its attention to the discovery of the North-west Passage. Now that the discovery has been really made, and its uselessness for purposes of commerce thoroughly demonstrated, we can look back upon these efforts with a feeling of complacency, not unmingled with regret at the memory of the brave souls whose lives have been sacrificed in pursuit of what may, after all, prove little better than a philosopher's toy. The renewed agitation began with a letter addressed to Lord Melville by Sir Joseph Banks, in which a diminution of cold "in the circum-polar regions" was alleged. Mention is made in this letter of the observations of a Mr. Scoresby, "a very intelligent young man." The suggestion thus thrown out by the society was at once adopted by the Government, who not only fitted out four vessels to make the required expedition, but invited the co-operation of the Royal Society in preparing the detailed instructions for the guidance of the officers, and in directing their attention to such objects as might tend to the increase of geographical knowledge and the general advancement of science. The expedition was divided into two parts, each consisting of two vessels—the *Isabella*, commanded by Capt. John Ross, and the *Alexander*, by Lieut. W. E. Parry, taking the North-west Passage; and the *Dorothea*, commanded by Captain Buchan, and the *Trent*, by Lieut. John Franklin, taking the Northward or Polar Passage. This was Franklin's first arctic voyage; when his last commenced is too well known to us all. In consequence of the recommendation of the Royal Society, Colonel Sabine joined the North-west Expedition, for the purpose of conducting the scientific investigations, and Mr. Fisher accompanied the Polar one. The ships sailed on the 18th of April, 1818, but did not meet with very good luck. Those destined for the North-west Passage got no further than lat. 75° in Baffin's Bay, where ice was met with, and the vessels were brought back to England. The other part of the expedition fell upon evil days in the North Sea, and became hampered in "the pack;" so that, in spite of the earnest entreaties of young Franklin to be permitted to go on alone, Captain Buchan was forced to bring the vessels under his charge home again. All the four ships were safe in port again within six months after the day of starting. The magnetic observations made by Colonel Sabine, during this flying visit to the Arctic seas, were considered, however, to be so valuable that the thanks of the society were specially tendered to him for them. Much blame was attached to Captain Ross, for the inefficient manner in which he had prosecuted the objects of the expedition, turning back at the first check, and refusing to face the first difficulty; but those who talk so largely and so confidently now will do well to remember that in those days there was a mystery about the Arctic Regions which the inquisitive curiosity of subsequent explorers has very much cleared up, and that Captain Ross might well shrink from the exposing the ships of his country, and the brave fellows by whom they were manned, to dangers which he did not understand. Next year, however, another expedition (this time commanded by Parry) was sent to explore Lancaster's Sound, and to endeavour to force a passage into Behring's Straits; and at the recommendation of the Council, Colonel Sabine was appointed Astronomer. This expedition was infinitely more successful than its predecessor, for it not only discovered Barrow's straits, but by crossing the meridian of 110° W. from Greenwich, in the lat. 74° 44' 20", became entitled to the reward of 5000*l.* offered by an Order in Council to such of his Majesty's subjects as should succeed in penetrating thus far to the westward within the Arctic Circle. This expedition, which lasted eighteen months, terminated happily with the return of the *Hecla* and *Griper* on the 3rd of November 1820.

It is now time to make some reference to the connection of Sir Humphrey Davy with the Royal Society. As early as 1801, when he was only twenty-three years old, this remarkable man had acquired a reputation in the scientific world by his lectures on galvanism, delivered at the Royal Institution. The very next year he was appointed professor, and from that time forward the results of his invaluable labours

appear in the annals both of that institution and of the Royal Society. From the commencement of his career this great chemist was remarkable as much for the extent as for the profundity of his researches: galvanism and electro-chemistry, the analysis of the mineral bases, agricultural chemistry, tanning, and a variety of other minor subjects, occupied his attention in their turn, and in all the results of his labours were tangible and valuable.

In 1807, upon the occasion of delivering his second Bakerian lecture before the Royal Society, he announced his grand discovery of the metallic bases of the fixed alkalis. Two years before, he had received the Copley medal, for "various communications published in the *Philosophical Transactions*." From that time, up to 1815, his attention was principally engrossed by his researches into the metallic bases of various earths. In that year he turned his attention to combustion and flame, and the result was the discovery of the safety-lamp—a discovery which, in spite of the adverse claims of Mr. George Stephenson and Dr. Clanney, must be considered to be entirely his. The Rumford medal of 1816 was awarded to him for a paper "On Combustion and Flame." He was appointed one of the secretaries of the Royal Society in 1807, and continued to exercise that office up to the time of his elevation to the presidential chair. The controversy respecting the invention of the safety-lamp is incidentally referred to by Mr. Weld, and the evidence on the subject is very fairly brought forward by that gentleman. For the present we can do no more than record that the Royal Society unreservedly pronounced Davy to be the sole discoverer of the fact that an explosion of inflammable gas will not pass through tubes and apertures of small dimensions, and that he was the independent inventor of the first really safe safety-lamp. If any further testimony be wanting, it may be extracted from the fact that the coal-owners presented him with a testimonial in the shape of 2500*l.*, which was laid out in the purchase of a magnificent service of plate. This service of plate he bequeathed to the Royal Society, for the purpose of being melted down and made into medals, to be bestowed upon the authors of the greatest chemical discoveries; but the bequest was only to take effect after the death of Lady Davy. We presume that, as this contingency has happened, the society is now in possession of the plate.

The year 1820, which was that in which George III. died, also witnessed the death of the venerable President of the Royal Society. Sir Joseph had been long getting very old. Age had impaired his senses of seeing and hearing, and at last the conviction was forced upon him that he was quite unable to fulfil the duties of his office. It must have been a sore trial to the poor old man to give up the office which had been the pride of his existence, but he bore it well; and the society, for its part, manifested a tender and creditable consideration for the feelings of its venerable President. In May 1820 Sir Joseph caused it to be announced to the society that, finding he could no longer discharge his duties as before, he had resolved to retire; whereupon the Council passed a resolution to the effect that they would not accept the resignation, and requested him to continue in his office. To this proposition he acceded,—we may imagine not unwillingly,—when suddenly he was thrust from the seat which he had retained so long by a hand which spares not even presidents of the Royal Society: he died on the 19th of June 1820. So ended the reign of Sir Joseph Banks, who, if he was not the greatest, was certainly the most enduring president of the Royal Society. As the members of that society had honoured him in his life, so they delighted to honour him after his death. A subscription was set on foot among the members for the full-length statue of him by Chantrey, which now stands in the entrance-hall of the British Museum. The surplus of the sum collected was applied to an engraving of the statue, of which copies were widely distributed.

After the death of Banks Dr. Wollaston held the office of President until the next anniversary meeting, when Sir Humphrey Davy was elected. Wollaston, whose chief celebrity is as a chemist, was originally a physician of some eminence. It is stated that he abandoned his profession through pique, on account of losing the appointment of physician to St. George's Hospital. It is, however, difficult to believe that so poor a motive could have influenced a man of such great

mental power; and another very sufficient reason for his conduct has been found in the fact that he had a considerable sum of money left to him at the time, which enabled him to follow the bent of his inclination by pursuing his researches in natural science. In addition to his knowledge of chemistry, which was great, Dr. Wollaston was also deeply versed in astronomy, optics, mechanics, acoustics, mineralogy, crystallography, physiology, pathology, and botany, upon all of which subjects there are papers by him to be found in the "Transactions" of the Royal Society. It is to him that we owe the demonstration of the identity between galvanism and electricity. His chemical discoveries were also extremely valuable; for he it was who first made known palladium and rhodium as distinct metals, besides many other discoveries of equal importance, such as the camera lucida, the periscopic glasses, and an apparatus for ascertaining the power of bodies to refract light. It is related of him that he was accustomed to perform his experiments in the greatest seclusion, and used such simple apparatus that one day, when a foreign philosopher pressed him home to be allowed to examine his laboratory: "Certainly," replied the great chemist, and forthwith produced a small tray containing some glass tubes, a blow pipe, two or three watch glasses, a slip of platinum, and a few test tubes. It was his opinion that only bunglers and pretenders require expensive apparatus, and that a great truth may be as readily demonstrated upon a watch glass as in the most elaborate crystal receiver. He was the intimate friend of Davy, whom he accompanied upon his angling expeditions—almost the only relaxation in a life passed in conscientious labour. So popular was he among the Fellows of the Royal Society, that a party of them endeavoured to keep him permanently in the presidency, to the exclusion of Davy. Wollaston, however, declined the honour, and threw the whole weight of his support into Davy's scale, who was accordingly elected, not, however, without some opposition.

If the truth must be told, it is not difficult to understand the reason of this opposition. At the time when Davy was elected President, those disagreeable qualities in his character which afterwards rendered him very unpopular among his brother philosophers were beginning to be apparent. During the earlier part of his career, no one could have been more modest, no one more admirable in the self-denying industry of his mode of life, than Sir Humphrey Davy; indeed, had it been otherwise, he could not, in all human probability, have made those great discoveries which elevated him to fame. But success spoiled him. Gradually he grew less and less fond of work, and more and more greedy of the ostentatious flattery and vain enjoyments of the fashionable world. When the son of a Cornish yeoman found himself the lion of London drawing-rooms, it would have been scarcely surprising had he suffered himself to listen for awhile to the siren-song of the tempter; but that his infatuation should last all the remainder of his life, and should even cause him to neglect those high matters in which alone his true patent of nobility was to be found, is a fact most deplorable and humiliating. When he received the honour of knighthood in 1812, the royal accolade seems quite to have turned his head; for, from that time forward, Sir Humphrey was quite another person from plain Mister. Three days after that event he was married to Mrs. Apreece, a widow and a lady of fashion. She was the daughter and heiress of Charles Kerr, Esq., of Kelso, and inherited a considerable fortune. We would desire to speak with the greatest respect of a lady who has but lately passed from this mortal scene, and who left behind her an unmingled feeling of respect; but it will not be inconsistent with that to say that a rich and fashionable widow, however suitable to Sir Humphrey, was not the wife for a hard-working chemist. What had this fine lady, with her love of elegant pleasure and her refined habits, to do with the dirty labours of the laboratory, after the first novelty of curiosity about the employment of her chemist-husband had abated? To her gases must have been "smells," acids "horrid messes," and batteries, in more than one sense, "shocking." Very natural was it that this successful man, rejoicing in the already surpassing result of his toil, should think that it was pardonable, if not desirable, to take a moment's rest—but one quaff of the intoxicating draught—and so the mischief came about. The habit of work passed away, and that

of idleness supervened. Hannibal was now fairly in Capua. If Davy had married ten years sooner, we might still have been unaware of the metallic bases of the alkalis.

From what has been said, the reader will understand that the opposition among the fellows to his election was not unnatural. It may be that some of them, holding poor Sir Joseph in mind, were not desirous of having another aristocratically-minded President. At any rate, Davy himself was not indifferent to the matter; for even his brother relates that when his election was announced, "he showed no undue excitement" at his success.

His presidency lasted only seven years, and his conduct in the office certainly did not tend to revive his drooping popularity. Following the example of Sir Joseph Banks, he was accustomed to occupy the chair in a full court-suit,—a piece of mummery which, however excusable in Sir Joseph, was certainly unworthy of so great a man as Davy. Not content with this, he is stated to have importuned the Government, and in vain, for the red ribbon which had adorned his predecessor's breast. Poor human vanity; to what strange straits dost thou betray thyself? To think that the man who was endowed with god-like wisdom to probe the secrets of creation, should have been brought so low as to beg in vain for a bit of sarsnet! Dr. Paris, in his analysis of Davy's character, makes these sensible observations:—"An inordinate admiration of hereditary rank was the cardinal deformity of Davy's character; it was the centre from which all his defects radiated, and continually placed him in false positions; for the man who rests his claims upon doubtful or ill-defined pretensions, from a sense of insecurity, naturally become jealous at every apparent intimation, and he is suspicious of the sincerity of that respect which he feels may be the fruit of usurpation." Next to the earlier period—we may almost call it the work-period of Davy's career—that portion of his life upon which it is most pleasant to dwell is the two years which intervened between his resignation of the Presidency and his death. This was the time which he spent abroad with Lady Davy, travelling from one part of the Continent to another, and seeking after health more than amusement. Then it was that he wrote "Salmonia," a book ever dear to salmon-fishers. Mr. Weld, who also seems to be a professor of the gentle art, dwells upon this episode in the great chemist's life with affectionate interest. "It is (says he) one of my 'pleasures of memory' to look back on an autumn, during some weeks of which, rod in hand, I followed the footsteps of the author of 'Salmonia,' amidst the magnificent scenery of Styria. I made Aussee my head-quarters; the village remains in the same primitive condition as when Davy put up at the little humble inn kept by Hackl. No fashionable tourists are to be found there, no waiters talking many languages—no guides—and no extortion. The inhabitants are supremely ignorant of any tongue save their own barbarous German; and the village boasts no curiosities, no castles, not even a church worthy turning off the road to see." Sir Humphrey Davy died at Geneva, on the 29th of May, 1829, in the fifty-first year of his age. Lady Davy survived him many years in fact, she died but a very short time back; and if her fondness for social amusement up to the very last hour of her existence can be taken as an indication of how she passed her married life, it must be admitted that, however amiable as a lady, she was not the wife for a working-man.

But when all has been said against Sir Humphrey Davy that can possibly be urged, one thing remains clear and undeniable, that when he was elevated to the chair, the society was at least, after a long interval, presided over by a man whose genius gave him a right to his place. The seven years of Davy's presidency were glorified by the labours of a band of scientific men, such as, perhaps, had never worked together before. Nor did the chemical tendency of the President tend at all to restrict the limits of investigation among the other Fellows. The volumes of "Transactions" for those years are filled with the labours of Herschel, Buckland, Airy, Wollaston, Sabine, Kater, Dalton, Babbage, Brewster, Brande, and Faraday. The last was the pupil of Sir Humphrey, under whose superintendence he acquired that perfect manipulation which is one of his distinguishing characteristics as an experimenter. Many of that glorious band are still alive, illumining with their genius the dark

corners of science. After his elevation, the President himself wrote many papers, but, as far as we are aware, made no very important discoveries, with the exception of his communication to Government, pointing out a remedy for the corrosion of copper-sheathing, by rendering it electro-positive a discovery which was, however, rendered all but useless from the fact that the same agency which prevented the oxidation of the metal rendered the sheathing more liable to be fouled by the accumulation of vegetable and marine matter. Davy's disappointment at the comparative failure of the discovery, upon which he is said to have plumed himself very much, was great.

The Fellows were, however, very active. In 1821 the Académie Royale des Sciences and the Board of Longitude at Paris invited the Royal Society to cooperate in another trigonometrical survey, with a view of correcting the results arrived at in 1790. In 1822, some complaints having been made to the Admiralty, alleging dangerous consequences upon the use of coal-tar on board ships, the question was referred to the Royal Society for decision, when, after inquiry, it was reported that coal-tar was not injurious. We mention these matters to show that whenever any question of national importance was to be decided, it was referred to the Royal Society. One of the most important scientific reforms effected by the Royal Society about this period was brought about in their capacity of visitors to the Observatory at Greenwich, where they so ordered matters that observations were thenceforward taken all through the twenty-four hours.

But perhaps the most important scientific event which happened during Davy's presidency was Mr. Babbage's invention of the calculating-machine. The idea of working out arithmetical calculations by mechanism was not a new one, for it had been attempted by many mechanicians, some of whom had partially succeeded. At first sight, the notion of effecting that by a machine which appears to be exclusively within the province of the intellect may seem chimerical enough. A very little reflection, however, should serve to establish the difference between the results of combining and comparing different laws, and the unerring product of one unchanging law. When the latter has been ascertained, and a machine constructed so as to fit its conditions, nothing is necessary but to set that machine in motion, and it can do the work more quickly and with greater precision than the brain of man. Mr. Babbage's experiments were directed with a view to the preparation by machinery of logarithmic tables. This he accomplished, and with such success that when the machine was at last put together it was found to be able to calculate with 4000 figures, and to ascertain the numerical value of any algebraic function. By its aid he prepared his "Tables of Logarithms of the Natural Numbers," from 1 to 108,000, by far the most accurate work of the kind that has yet been printed. Not content, however, with this, he wished to make still further improvements, and by complicating his machine, is understood to have spoiled it. At any rate, after an expenditure of 17,000*l.* (out of which he never received a pennyworth of benefit for himself), the machine is still incomplete, and is, we believe, now entirely inactive.

When Mr. Babbage first introduced his machine to the notice of the Royal Society a committee was appointed to take it into consideration. The report was altogether in its favour; "That it appears that Mr. Babbage has displayed great talents and ingenuity in the construction of his machine for computation, which the committee think fully adequate to the attainment of the objects proposed by the inventor, and that they consider Mr. Babbage as highly deserving of public encouragement in the prosecution of his arduous undertaking." In consequence of this report the Treasury granted Mr. Babbage 1500*l.*, to enable him to construct his machine, which was commenced in July 1823. More money was subsequently advanced, and years passed over, but still no tidings of the machine. At length Government again appealed to the Royal Society to inquire into the matter, and obtained a report that "the progress made was as great as could be expected, considering the numerous difficulties to be overcome, and that they had no hesitation in giving their opinion that the engine was likely to fulfil the expectations entertained of it by its inventor." This was a very strong opinion, and Government,

taking heart, advanced more money upon the strength of it. In the year 1829, however, it was found necessary to make a fresh representation to the Duke of Wellington, who with that prompt decision which characterised him, went at once and examined the machine; after which, he recommended a grant of 3000*l.*, which was paid by the Treasury. Fresh difficulties arose, and fresh applications for money were addressed by Mr. Babbage to the Treasury. In 1830, the Government specially requested the Royal Society to superintend the matter, and to see that "the work is proceeding in a satisfactory manner, and without unnecessary expense, and what further sum, may possibly be necessary for its completion." The result of this inspection was that the expenditure of a considerable sum of money was recommended. Fireproof workshops were built in the neighbourhood of Mr. Babbage's residence in Dorset-street, and the whole of the machinery was removed thereto. No sooner, however, had this been effected, than fresh and unforeseen difficulties arose. Mr. Clement, the clever machinist, who had all through the business superintended the construction, made a demand upon the Government which was thought so extravagant that it was at once rejected; and Mr. Clement consequently not only ceased to superintend the construction of the machine, but removed all the valuable tools which had been used in the work, a circumstance which was all the more important, because some of these tools had been invented expressly for the machine. But, while the works were thus at a standstill, another and even more serious cause of delay arose: Mr. Babbage made some discoveries which appeared to open up principles of quite a new kind, and which rendered possible the application of machinery to calculations infinitely more complicated than what had originally been contemplated. This rendered it necessary for Mr. Babbage to explain the nature of his discoveries to the Government; but at that time there happened several changes of ministry, and nine years were spent in endeavours to obtain a decision upon Mr. Babbage's new application of the machine, and, at length, in 1842, during the ministry of Sir Robert Peel, a reply was returned to the effect that the Government did not feel justified in incurring any further expense about the matter, and that they consequently begged leave to decline any further connection with Mr. Babbage's machine: at the same time making him a free present of all that had been laid out, and offering him the machine, as it then stood, entirely at his own disposal. This offer was, however, rejected by Mr. Babbage, and the machine, therefore, remains the property of the Government, who, in 1843, acceded to the request of the Trustees of King's College, London, by permitting it to be exhibited in the museum of the institution, where it may still be found. Even in its present unfinished state, it is a marvel of mechanical skill. "It is capable," says Mr. Weld, "of calculating to five figures and two orders of difference, and performs the work with absolute precision; but no portion whatever of printing machinery, which was one of the great objects in the construction of the engine, exists." It is not our province here to discuss the principles of calculating machines, or to predict how far they will be carried by the labours of ingenious men; but of this we feel quite certain, that to whatever pitch of perfection they may be carried, all after-comers in that field cannot look otherwise than with gratitude and admiration upon the achievements of Charles Babbage.

In 1823 a revision was made of the statutes of the Royal Society, which had remained unaltered for nearly half a century. Many changes had taken place in the society during that period, and it was to accommodate these that the laws were amended. Considering also the great diminution in the value of money since the original foundation of the society, and that no increase had been made upon the shilling-a-week contributions, it was resolved to raise the subscriptions to four pounds a year and to increase the entrance-fee from five to ten pounds. "Another very important alteration consisted in limiting the number of foreign members to fifty, and so conducting the manner of their election that none but persons of high scientific distinction should be admitted to the honour. This was effected by the Council nominating the candidates, and the opinion of each member being taken by ballot, before the approved candidate was brought before the society for ultimate election." Many other

minor changes were at this time effected, all tending to increase the scope of the society's usefulness.

In 1825 Sir Robert Peel desired the society to report: "Whether the operations of the gas companies are now carried on upon such principles as would admit, with a due attention to the public safety, of the supervision and control with which the Secretary of State is invested by the powers of the Legislature?" To which question, after due examination, answer was made that "there was a great necessity for the improvement of some of the works, and a propriety of occasional superintendence of all of them." During the same year, his Majesty King George the Fourth instituted the Royal Medals in the manner which has been already recorded.

An expedition into the Arctic seas, by Captain Parry and Captain James Ross, occupied the attention of the Royal Society in 1827. This was the expedition of the *Hecla*. The plan adopted was to go as far as possible in the vessel and then to travel over the ice. By this means they attained the extraordinary high latitude of 80° 45'.

In November 1827, Sir Humphry Davy's health compelled him to resign the presidency, and he was succeeded by Davies Gilbert, Esq., a wealthy gentleman, "devoted to mathematical and philosophical pursuits." As the name of this gentleman does not appear to be known beyond the pale of the Royal Society, we cannot do better than subjoin Mr. Weld's account of him:—"He was a diligent collector of ancient traditions, legendary tales, songs, and carols, illustrating the manners of the Cornish peasants; and printed various ballads at his house at Eastbourn. He possessed great memory and powers of quotation and anecdote. It has been said of him that his most endearing talent was his power of conversation. It was not brilliant; it was something infinitely beyond, and better than mere display; it was a continued stream of learning and philosophy, adapted with excellent taste to the capacity of his auditory, and enlivened with anecdotes to which the most listless could not but listen and learn." It was during the presidency of Mr. Gilbert that the duty of carrying into effect the munificent bequest of the Earl of Bridgewater devolved upon the President of the Royal Society. The result of this bequest was, as everybody knows, the famous "Bridgewater Treatises." Poor old Mr. Gilbert, feeling the grave responsibility of his task too heavy for him, called in the aid of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, and, acting under the advice of those eminent prelates, he directed that eight treatises should be written instead of one, as mentioned in the will. This gave great dissatisfaction among those who were not employed to write any treatise at all; and it was loudly said that the Earl "intended that one work should be written, and not eight, and that, if one person could not be found competent to execute the laborious and highly difficult task, two or more learned and scientific men were to be called in to assist in compiling a volume of the nature mentioned in the will." It seems, however, to us that if the authors of the eight treatises were satisfied with having the prize divided amongst them, no one has a right to complain. The general public, who gained eight good treatises instead of one, has certainly only a subject for congratulation.

Towards the end of Mr. Gilbert's Presidency a scene occurred which reminds us somewhat of the old by-gone battles of which its meeting room was made the arena in the days of Sir Hans Sloane. Sir James South had published a pamphlet entitled *Charges against the President and Council of the Royal Society*, in which some very severe animadversions were made upon the manner in which the Society was then conducted. A copy of this pamphlet was forwarded by its author for presentation to the library of the society, whereupon Mr. Gilbert refused to present it. This was the cause of the scene; for at a meeting of the society, held on the 25th of November, 1830, Sir James South contended that it did not rest with the President to refuse any donations to the society's library; he had made charges, it was true, but he was (so he stated) both able and willing to establish them. No material discussion followed this; but it was evident that the condition of the society, so far as the President and Council were concerned, was unsatisfactory to other Fellows besides Sir

James South. At a meeting of several of the most influential Fellows, a resolution was adopted, intimating that it was desirable "that the officers and council should be selected from among such members of the society as are, by their acquaintance with the condition and interests of science, best qualified to discharge such offices." It was now understood that Mr. Gilbert would resign, and the only question which puzzled the society was whom they should select for their next president. Upon this there was a great difference of opinion; some being for the Duke of Sussex, and some for Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Herschel. The old opinion still held ground, and is possibly not yet eradicated, that it is desirable to have a president qualified, not only by his position in the scientific world, but still more so by his social and political influence, to give a sort of extrinsic importance to the proceedings of the society. This, at least, is the only theory by which we can account for the occasional selection of persons, whose scientific attainments may be best expressed by the definition in the statutes of All Souls' College—*moderate docti*. At this election, after a very warm canvass, and no inconsiderable amount of pamphleteering, the Duke of Sussex triumphed over Sir John Herschel by a majority of eight.

This Royal Duke held the office during the eight years which remained to him of life; but if the truth must be told, its duties were principally discharged by the Vice-Presidents. The most active Fellows during that period appear to have been the Astronomer Royal, Mr. Daniell, Herschel, Lyell, Whewell, James Forbes, and Faraday, whose papers in the various departments of astronomy, optics, geology, and electricity enrich the *Transactions* about that time. After the death of the Duke of Sussex, the Marquis of Northampton was appointed, and he continued to hold the office during the remainder of his life—a period of nearly ten years. To him succeeded Lord Rosse, who resigned in 1854, after a reign of six years, and then came the election of Lord Wrottesley, who now fills the chair of the Royal Society.

Of the Lord Rosse we can have scarcely anything to tell which our readers are not already acquainted with. His great knowledge in various departments of natural science—the zeal and success with which he has devoted himself to the study of optics and astronomy—the history of his splendid telescope, the difficulties to be overcome in the construction of it, and the ingenuity with which he triumphed over them—all these are matters of familiar knowledge to the public. It was during his presidency that the society (which had already, in 1846, bestowed upon M. Le Verrier the Copley Medal for precisely the same investigations) recognised the claims of our own countryman, Mr. John Couch Adams, by awarding to him the same medal, for "Investigations relative to the disturbances of Uranus, and of his application of the inverse problem of perturbations thereto." After his resignation of the presidency, Lord Rosse seems to have made some attempt at bringing about what he considered a necessary reform in the constitution of the society. It appeared to him that instead of leaving the various sciences to form separate societies of their own, entirely distinct and disconnected from the Royal Society, the latter might remain the fountain-head and chief tribunal of last resort in every branch of human knowledge, if the council could only be made to comprise representatives of all the sciences. Bearing this view in mind, he circulated a memorandum, calling the attention of the Fellows to the alteration which had taken place in the position of the Royal Society since its foundation in the reign of Charles II., when all the scientific men of any importance then in the kingdom were included within its limits; and pointing out that, however convenient it might then have been to limit the number of the council to twenty, that number was, in his opinion, insufficient to ensure the due representation at the Council Board of every branch of science. After due consideration, however, this proposition was negatived; the Fellows doubtless considering, and very wisely so, that a council consisting of twenty members was quite as large as was conveniently workable. And, indeed, if we cast our eye over the council list as it at present stands, it would be difficult to name any science which is not represented upon it. We may, perhaps, detect a slightly undue preponderance of the medical element, but the gentlemen who bear M.D. after their names are so eminent in other respects that it

would be unfair to offer a serious criticism on that account. Until the year 1847 admission into the Royal Society was so comparatively easy that many persons obtained admission who would, under the present regulations, have no chance of ever writing F.R.S. after their names. This fact will account for much that would astonish the reader if, after hearing that the Royal Society is supposed to consist of the most enlightened minds, and *those only*, he were to glance over a list of the Fellows. The fact is that the days of Mr. Gilbert and the Duke of Sussex were dark days for the society. In 1847, however, a thorough revision of the statutes took place, and the rules for admission were made so stringent that it is next to impossible for any but a first-rate man to find his way in. According to the new statutes, every candidate must be proposed by at least six Fellows, of whom three at least must certify their recommendation from personal knowledge. This recommendation is to be a specific, and not a general one, and must specify something of which the candidate has been the discoverer, or author, or inventor, or must declare him to be distinguished for his acquaintance with some science, or that he is *eminent* in some way or other. The elections only take place once a year, and only fifteen candidates can go for election each year. In the event of more candidates being proposed (which is probably almost always the case), fifteen are selected by the Council, and a list of them is sent round to the Fellows. This Council-list is not absolutely binding upon the Fellows, for it is optional with them to erase any particular name or names and substitute those of other candidates; but no one can vote for more than fifteen. After his election, the candidate must make his appearance and be admitted on or before the fourth ordinary meeting of the society after his election, and must make the necessary payments and sign the obligation in the charter-book. In the matter of subscriptions, much greater stringency is observed than in the old days, when the Treasurer was complaining that his funds were running short.

The session of the Royal Society commences on the third Thursday in November, and ends on the third Thursday in June; Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun vacations being, of course, observed. According to the statutes, no stranger, excepting foreign ambassadors and ministers, and other distinguished persons specially invited by the President, is permitted to attend the meeting, unless by order of the President, or by leave obtained of the society upon the written recommendation of some Fellow before the President takes the chair. The anniversary meeting of the society is held on the 30th of November in each year, or, if that should fall on a Sunday, on the 1st of December, when the President delivers his annual address, and presents the Copley, Rumford, and Royal medals to the respective medal-men.

Thinking that our readers might be curious to know the exact form of a meeting of the Royal Society, we availed ourselves of the kindness of the assistant-secretary to obtain that leave of the society for that purpose which is required by the statutes. It fortunately happened that the evening on which our visit took place was that on which the Croonian Lecture was to be delivered, and there was an unusually large attendance of Fellows—probably between fifty and sixty. The new meeting-hall and library in Burlington-house are as yet in an unfinished state, and consequently have a somewhat bare appearance; but their noble proportions give good promise of what they will be when they are properly furnished, decorated with the pictures and books of the society, and all the contemplated arrangements have been completed. The acoustical condition of the great meeting-hall is at present in a very deplorable state, it being quite impossible to hear distinctly at a greater distance than five or six yards; whilst, if the speaker happens to be turning his back to you his voice flies off into the distance and never finds its way back again to your ears. It need hardly be observed that this matter is at present occupying the serious attention of the society, and that among all the eminent philosophers who are numbered among its Fellows something will be devised to render the hall as perfect in the matter of acoustics as it is possible to be. A very brilliant gas-light is cast over the room by a burner of a new description, set in the middle of the ceiling, consisting of rosettes of flame arranged in a circular form. The only objection to this is that it gives the meeting a

rather odd appearance, by giving all the shadows a downward tendency, which may readily be obviated by arranging a few supplementary burners upon the side-walls. The dais for the president, secretaries, and lecturers is placed against the wall, half-way down the hall. In the area of the room are chairs for the Fellows; but these will probably be replaced by seats of a more permanent and less *shuffle-able* character. Turning our attention to the dais, we find a handsome arm-chair (not exactly the throne which Sir Joseph Banks ambitioned, but a comfortable morocco-covered chair nevertheless) for the President; on either side of this stand the chairs for the secretaries, and further on, to the left of the President, a chair, table, and black drawing-board for the Fellow who is to deliver the lecture or read a paper. In the front of the President's chair is the table, in one of the drawers of which reposes the mace until the time comes for it to be drawn forth and be placed upon the velvet cushion which is waiting to receive it: behind the cushion is the handsome silver-gilt inkstand presented by John Symmons, Esq., F.R.S., in 1797.

So much for the general appearance of the room before the opening of the meeting. As the hour of half-past eight approached the Fellows began to drop in, and very shortly after the appointed hour the chair was taken by Lord Wrottesley, supported to the right and left by the two secretaries, William Sharpey, M.D., and George Gabriel Stokes, Esq.; Mr. Paget, the Anatomy Professor at King's College, who was the Fellow appointed to deliver the Croonian Lecture, took his place at the table appointed for him, whilst an assistant concealed himself behind the drawing-board for the purpose of aiding in the preparation of the experiments. The reader may here be reminded that, according to the terms of Dr. Croone's will, this lecture must always be accompanied by experiment—a fact which (disagreeable as it may seem to those who think that exalted science should be uninteresting) is one great cause of the popularity which this lecture enjoys. Had the paper to be read been on "The Theory of Definite Integrals," not fifty but ten members would have been more likely to grace the gathering.

After the secretaries had disposed of the routine business, which, as we could not hear a word of it, we may as well suppose to have been not very important, the President announced that Mr. Paget would deliver the Croonian lecture. Mr. Paget forthwith commenced. Let the reader imagine a slim, gentlemanly (even refined looking) man, with well cut and rather prominent features, eyes deep set—under a pile of forehead, and a remarkable development of the frontal sinus, straight dark hair, not a vestige of whisker, and an expression of long-trained patient thoughtfulness, he will have a very good idea of Mr. Paget, who is one of the ablest anatomists of the day. The subject chosen for the Croonian lecture was: "The Cause of the Rhythmic Action of the Heart." Of course we shall not endeavour to follow an argument which could be intelligible only to persons already deeply versed in physiology; but we may say generally, that it appeared to connect the rhythmic action of the heart with the great and mysterious nervous system to which all the phenomena of life seem ultimately attributable. And here let us frankly admit that such obscurity as prevented us from clearly understanding what was said had its origin entirely from within ourselves and not at all from the argument of the lecturer. Calmness and impressiveness of manner, elegance and force of language, a logical arrangement of the argument, a graphic description of facts—all these were supplied by Mr. Paget: all that it was necessary for the bearer to bring with him was a previous knowledge of the subject—and that we had not. Those present who were able to follow the lecturer through all the turns of his argument expressed themselves as highly delighted with the treatment of the subject, and we could well believe that they had good reason so to be. The experiments used in illustration of the lecture were made upon the hearts of tortoises, which had been prepared for the occasion by having their heads cut off in the adjoining room. It is stated that the rhythmic action in the heart of such an animal will continue for some hours after death has supervened; at any rate it was continuing when the lecturer produced them for illustration, and showed how, by an arrangement of ligatures, how he could stop the action at will,

and how, by the application of stimulus, it could be revived again. The delivery of the lecture occupied about an hour, after which several of the Fellows present addressed the society upon the question. Sir Benjamin Brodie (who must be now one of the veterans of the society, seeing that for many a long year he has done argumentative battle in the august presence of Sir Joseph Banks, and has been for nearly half a century a Fellow) led the van; after him came Dr. Carpenter and Mr. Huxley, both eminent physiologists, and then some other Fellows. The discussion after the lecture lasted nearly three quarters of an hour, and when it was over the President adjourned the meeting, and read the titles of the papers to be read, after which the Fellows moved into the library, where excellent tea and the usual concomitants were served up, and after standing about engaged in social chat upon the lecture they had heard, or the events of the day, the gathering quietly dispersed.

The Royal Society, according to its constitution, is divided, like all other well-ordered communities, into a governing body and a governed. The governing body consists of the president and the council, which is composed of twenty members, and includes the treasurer and the three secretaries—two home and one foreign. There are six vice-presidents, all of whom are members of the council. Ten of the council retire annually, but a useful member may be re-elected from year to year. Besides the council, in order to conduct the business of the Society there are a variety of committees, which are elected out of the great body of the Society, including the council, and which take charge each one of a separate science. The number of the Fellows is about seven hundred, and there are fifty foreign members, among whom will be found the most distinguished scientific men in the world. As the eye passes down the list, we note such names as Agassiz, Argelander, Becquerel, Brogniart, Chevreul, Encke, Flourens, Humboldt, Le Verrier, Muller, Plane, Quetelet, Struve, and Thénard. The list of English Fellows is, of course, replete with celebrated names; but if we were to assert that there were no eminent men of science whose names are not to be found there, we should lead the reader into a mistake, and if we were to assert that names do not occasionally occur which are by no means celebrated or eminent for anything whatever, we should betray him into a still more grievous error. As we have already explained, there have been times when, through want of proper care, the society was permitted to run a little to seed, and retrograde from that exalted position as the great national tribunal of science, which such men as Hooke, Newton, Halley, and even Davy raised it to. But although that has been the case, we can assure the reader that it is not so at present. The society now exhibits such a fitting sense of its own dignity, that it is impossible for any but a really first-rate man to gain admission. The list of newly elected Fellows for 1856 is before us, and among the fifteen names which it contains, there is not one who has not gained a European reputation. This is the way to recover its ancient position, and to retain that leadership which it has always held over the scientific societies of the world. What we mean when we refer to its ancient position is that which it once held of being scientific adviser to the Crown and nation. Time was, as the reader will remember, when every question of importance, which came within any department of science, was referred to the Royal Society; but now it is otherwise. Either Government is too fond of patronage, or its confidence in the Royal Society has gone; but we are not aware that for a very long time any official communication has been made to the society requesting its opinion upon any matter whatsoever. On the contrary, whenever there is a great building to be erected, and it becomes desirable to have a geological opinion as to the qualities of certain stone, or when there is a bell to be cast, or a new principle to be adopted, Government does not now, as of yore, send for a report of the Royal Society on the matter; but it apparently prefers to pay a large sum of money to some geologist, or to some barrister, or to some other private individual, to choose the stone, design the bell, or decide the point. This is not as it should be. The Royal Society is not a whit less efficient than it has ever been; but, on the contrary, it contains a larger proportion of able men than ever before, from its foundation until

now. When among the great body of the Fellows we find such names as Stokes, Sabine, Fairbairn, Adams, Babbage, Faraday, Lyell, Brewster, Herschel, Owen, Whewell, Murchison, and Brodie, and many others, whose names do not now occur to us, it cannot be said that Government would go far wrong in referring to the Royal Society any question of science upon which it is necessary that information should be obtained. We believe that, had this course been taken in many instances, deplorable blunders would have been avoided. And we say that this course ought to be taken; for the Royal Society is, by ancient custom and by right of place, the scientific adviser of the nation.

Let us hope that the recent removal of the Royal Society to Burlington House may have its effect in putting an end to that comparative obscurity in which the noble institution has been, in a manner, hid. What with the noise of other things which have had the charm of novelty on their side—Great Exhibitions, Departments of Art, etcetera, etcetera—we have somehow grown into a forgetfulness that there exists among us a body which contains some of the most distinguished men of science in the world, and to which in former times the nation was accustomed to look as the head of the scientific world. This hiding of the Royal Society seems to have dated from the time when it ceased, in a manner, to have an independent existence, by giving up its own residence and removing to Somerset House. Mr. Weld appears to have been of this opinion when, at the conclusion of his book, he expressed a hope that the day was not far distant when a residence would be provided worthy of the Royal Society. "Indeed (cried he) it is paradoxical to hear of millions of pounds being expended on a palace of florid Gothic architecture for the two estates of Parliament, by far the largest of which is that representing the people, when the principal scientific society of the country, to which so much is due, is allowed to remain in the obscurity of the corner of a building devoted to Government offices." By the removal to Burlington House, Mr. Weld's wish is no doubt gratified, and the Royal Society has at length found a fitting home. Let us hope that for the future the nation will remember that this is not so much a private society as a truly national institution.

Up till very lately the relations between her Majesty's Government and the Royal Society have been most unsatisfactory. In his last anniversary address Lord Wrottesley adduced one instance (which is as good as a thousand) as an illustration of the sort of feeling which prevailed: "It had become necessary (said the worthy President to the society) to light the Kew Observatory with gas, in order to prosecute conveniently and successfully the important processes there carried on of testing meteorological instruments for the Government and foreign nations, and the photographic registration of physical phenomena. An application was made to Government to defray the cost, estimated at 250*l*. A long correspondence ensued, which is no bad illustration of the defects of the existing relations between science and the executive

authorities of the State. The application was declined. Immediately upon receiving notice of this disappointment, your council voted 250*l*. from the Wollaston Fund to the British Association, to be employed in lighting their observatory, and the works are now in progress." Another instance of the illiberal manner with which the Government has seen fit to deal with this eminent body is to be found in the refusal to sanction another and finally exhaustive search after Franklin and his lost crews. In the same able address from which the last quotation was taken, Lord Wrottesley referred in a very clear and convincing manner to the popular outcry which had been aroused upon the subject by ignorant and prejudiced persons:—"It is certain that science has sustained and does still sustain injury from the fear of offending against this popular notion, that it is wrong to hazard human life for such an object. In the case of the Polar Expedition the risk would be very small, inasmuch as the exploration, instead of being, as formerly, a tentative one, embracing many thousand miles of unknown coast, would be confined to a fixed and limited locality hitherto unexplored and possessed of great scientific interest. Independently of additions to our geographical and physical knowledge, the possible recovery of the magnetical observations, and the journals of the Franklin Expedition, is a consideration of great moment, since the former must have been made by officers well trained to the task, with excellent instruments verified before the sailing of the Expedition, and in localities possessing peculiar interest in reference to the theory of magnetism; and the latter would doubtless contain a narrative of the deepest interest, not only to the cultivators of science but to the public generally, and especially the relatives of the gallant men who are supposed to have perished. The Expedition is, however, also advocated on the score of humanity, for experienced Arctic navigators still think it not impossible that some survivors of the crews may be living among the savage tribes whose lot is cast among those inhospitable and barren regions. But admit that there is danger in these enterprises—Is it inglorious to perish in promoting human progress? You will not suspect me, I am sure, of being indifferent to the fate of brave men; but, in fact, it is well nigh impossible to add to our stock of physical knowledge without some risk to life. The astronomer, in his observatory, exposed night after night to the open air at a freezing temperature; the chemist, in his laboratory, among explosive and poisonous substances; the surgeon, who handles the dissecting knife—all equally with the adventurous traveller expose their lives to peril."

It has, we believe, for some time been generally understood that Lord Wrottesley has been using his best influence to improve the relations between Government and the Royal Society; and in this same address he frankly confesses that such was his object when he accepted the office of president. That he may be successful in this is our sincere and friendly wish; but in the meantime it is an open question whether it would not be more worthy of the Royal Society to bring its own influence to bear upon the Government, and upon

the public in some direct and open manner. The consideration of how this may be done should, of course, be left to those who are better acquainted with the general feeling of the Society than we are; but we may be permitted to suggest that whatever the *modus operandi*, it should have constantly in view the doing some practical good to the public. It is not too much to say that at present there is a very large body of the public entirely ignorant of the very existence of the society; and certainly among the majority of even the educated classes, very indistinct notions prevail as to its constitution and working. Learned persons are, indeed, aware of the inestimable value of the labours which the Royal Society quietly and unostentatiously effects; they hear of and comprehend the purport of those researches into the *arcana* of nature which the society from time to time directs; they know too how inestimable to the scientific world are those "Transactions" which are issued every year by the society; but of all this, the great body of the public knows nothing.

With the latter, the Royal Society is either a myth, or it is an aristocratic and rather pleasant club which meets to drink tea, talk, and talk gossip, at certain stated periods. It is high time, however, that this should be changed, and the only quarter from whence the change can come is the society itself. If we be asked how this is to be effected, we reply that it may be very well done by giving the public a direct interest in the existence of the society and its maintenance in its ancient position. The lectures delivered at the Museum of Practical Geology in Jernyn-street prove with what eagerness the working-classes seize an opportunity of listening to the truths of nature from persons of high authority in such matters. Could not the dignity of the Royal Society be so far accommodated to the spirit of the times as to induce them to throw open their fine new meeting-hall on certain evenings (say twice a week), when the public might gain admission, by ticket freely granted upon application, to listen to a lecture delivered by a Fellow of the Royal Society? Such a thing might, we should suppose, be managed without at all impairing the dignified position of the society. We should imagine that there would be little difficulty in persuading Fellows of great eminence to deliver these lectures, and if that were otherwise it would be possible to make it a duty to be undertaken by rotation. If this were carried out how much light that is now hidden would stream forth over the world. How would the people throng to hear Lord Rosse expounding, in familiar terms, the glories which he had witnessed through his telescope: how many would delight to hear Mr. Paget, or Mr. Huxley, lay bare the secrets of the human frame: how many would dwell upon the words of Faraday, of Owen, of Whewell, and of many other "Kings of Thought"? And what would be the result of this? Why, that the Royal Society would become an active fact in the land, and that people would know, love, and appreciate its labours. It would become what indeed it is now, but much more than it is now, a National Institution.

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Memoirs of the Literary, Artistic, and Scientific Societies.

NO. II.—THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS.

WE are quite aware that in attempting to give an account of the origin and constitution of the Royal Academy we expose ourselves to a difficulty which seems peculiar to the artistic societies. In narrating the history of any society belonging to the literary or scientific class, questions will naturally arise upon which there may fairly be some slight difference of opinion; and such is the natural proneness of the human mind to argue and dispute that it would be difficult indeed to select any society, be its career ever so short, which has not occasionally presented the unfortunate spectacle of a house divided against itself—which has not occasionally become the arena, not of grave and profitable argument, but of jealousy, intrigue, and quarrelling. In the greater part of societies, however, we are happy to say, this unseemly condition of affairs is the exception and not the rule. Generally speaking, there has been a laudable and consistent ambition to effect the specific objects for which the various societies were founded, and, as the best means of doing so, to sacrifice all minor differences of opinion to the general good. Not so, however, we regret to be compelled to declare, has been the career of the Royal Academy. Born of a quarrel, and fostered from its very infancy by intrigue, it seemed at one time never for a moment to forget its parentage, and in every page of its earlier history we find the constantly recurring traces of not only the most acrimonious disputes carried on between the Royal Academicians and the artists outside the Academy, but even of those internecine quarrels which never can occur without shaking the stability and damaging the prestige of any society whatever. So remarkable is this, that when we have got to the end of the story and look back upon the long catalogue of dissensions, it is marvellous to us that the Royal Academy has been able to keep its position so long, and to exercise the influence which it undoubtedly possesses in the artistic world. The only way to account for this is by recognising the fact that the Royal Academicians have of late years arrived at a better appreciation of their duties and position than before; that they have laboured and are labouring conscientiously to benefit the art and the general body of artists, rather than to monopolise patronage exclusively to themselves. Without denying that some of the old leaven may still be found in the body over which Sir Charles Eastlake presides, it is satisfactory to be able to admit the presence of a reforming element, which bids fair sooner or later to raise the Royal Academy to its proper position, as the mistress and protectress of the decorative Fine Arts.

There is another difficulty, moreover, in relating the history of the Royal Academy, and that is the irreconcilable difference of opinion among living artists as to every matter, without exception, upon which any question can arise, with respect to the Fine Arts. In relating the

disputes between Newton and Hooke, in considering the relative claims of Messrs. Adams and Le Verrier to the discovery of *Neptune*, we deal with matters which are susceptible of direct proof: when once the facts are established, the conclusion follows, as a matter of course. If a question should arise as to the relative accuracy of two separate measurements of a base line, it admits of an exact determination; the line can be measured over and over again by those improved means which modern science and modern instrument-making have placed at the disposal of the geometrician, and the matter is set at rest for ever. Grave, therefore, as the quarrels of scientific men may be, and fierce though they be so long as they endure, they have, nevertheless, this advantage, that they are determinable. Sooner or later Truth comes with her shield like a polished mirror, and her spear like that of Ithuriel, shows Error his own face, and shames him into submission—deals Ignorance one magic blow, and straightway disperses her into oblivion. But when the *causa belli* is a matter of art, than the position is far different; for no two artists can be truly said to have agreed absolutely together upon any principle of art: what one calls white another affirms to be black; and what one admires passionately a second esteems but faintly, and a third positively condemns. *Tot homines quot sententia!* There probably was never a picture painted yet which some one, with pretensions to understand the art, has not pronounced to be good. More occupied with carrying out each his individual whim than in endeavouring to discover that unerring standard of beauty which is said to exist, but which has not yet been made plain, the artists are themselves the worst possible authorities upon matters of art. They are divided into schools, and subdivided into cliques; and when you know the school or the clique to which any particular man belongs, you can predict with certainty the opinion which he will pronounce upon a given picture. One man worships Turner as a god, another decries him as a dauber; this one sees genius in Millais, and that one pooh-poohs Pre-Raphaelitism, and is enthusiastic in praise of Sir Edwin Landseer and his dogs. Mr. Haydon and the Frenchmen seem to have made up their minds that a historical picture, life-size, is the *summum bonum* of art; but the Dutch connoisseur infinitely prefers the simple subjects and minute scale of painting adopted by his favourites, Mieris, Maas, Terburg, and the like. What then are we to do? How to judge? Every man knows what pleases himself, and is, generally speaking, content with that knowledge; only critics are able to explain *why* they are pleased. But as soon as a man commits himself to an opinion in matters of art, he lays himself open to the scorn of the prejudiced and the condemnation of those who have no fixed opinions for themselves. Those who apparently have no opinion in common will unite to call him a blockhead or an enthusiast for declaring the faith that is in him. Artists will neither discover

the truth themselves, nor will they permit others to attempt to do so. Directly a writer appears who, after years spent in study and patient thought, endeavours to develop and explain a few principles of art, every dauber considers that he has a right to charge him with presumption and ignorance. What artist does not affect to despise Mr. Ruskin—the man of all others who has bestowed the most time and study and mental wealth upon the art, and has had the power of clothing his opinions with the best and most solid style of writing? Having the knowledge of this before us, we shall be careful, in setting forth this brief memoir, to avoid, as much as possible, all criticism upon the artistic merits of the various painters whom we shall find it necessary to name. We have no doubt that all, even the worst of them, have their admirers and imitators in the present day—gentlemen who can (we dare to say) give good reasons in technical terms (or, at least, reasons which sound as if they were good) for their peculiar predilections. With the exception, therefore, of the few great and established reputations about which the majority are agreed (such as Reynolds, Gainsborough, Lawrence), we shall confine our references as much as possible to the way in which each man figured in his connection with the Royal Academy.

We have said that the Royal Academy was born of an intrigue. Let us, as briefly as may be, state the facts which led up to its establishment. The condition of the art of painting in England at any time prior to the Reformation is not easily ascertainable. It is believed that at very early times there were painters (monks for the most part) who painted scriptural pieces and took portraits. Pilkington makes mention of a certain William, a monk of Windsor, and Master Walter, of Westminster. During many reigns, the English kings had Court portrait-painters, who were salaried, just as they had Court fools; but that they were of no very great merit seems fairly presumable from the fact that their works have perished and their names have been forgotten. It is perhaps almost a fortunate circumstance for art, and certainly for the credit of the Protestant Church, that there were no very considerable stores of art in England before the Reformation; inasmuch as, had they existed, they would certainly have been destroyed. Foreign painters from time to time paid short visits to our Court, and left traces of their sojourn behind them. Thus Holbein visited us in the time of Henry VIII., and we owe to his pencil the only reliable portrait which we possess of “bluff King Hal.” The zeal of Elizabeth in removing what she held to be idolatrous and Romanist abominations is well known. She abhorred painting, from a religious scruple, and destroyed all the works of art that came within her power. There is a story about a luckless Dr. Symson, who was Dean of her chapel, and who thought to please her by collecting a number of most beautiful miniatures and illuminations, which

he caused to be richly bound up with a service-book of Common Prayer, and laid upon the Queen's desk when she attended Divine worship. But all he got for his pains was a stern and cutting rebuke, such as "the imperial vestal" knew well how to administer, and an intimation that, as he valued her favour, he must put away all such Popish profanities for the future.

It was only when Charles the Second brought his merry court from France that the art of painting began to be really known in England. But even then it was only portrait-painting that was fashionable—portrait-painting, which may be the highest, but is, generally speaking, the lowest form of the art. To be flattered by the skilful pencil of a Kneller or a Lely; to possess the portraits of mistresses whose charms looked much better upon canvass than in reality; to leave to posterity an exaggerated notion of their comeliness and dignity—these were among the most cherished luxuries of that profligate court. The fashion which then prevailed has never since been lost, and portrait-painting is still the branch of the art most favoured among the vain-glorious patrons of art. Kneller used to say, "I paint the living that I may be enabled to live"—a phrase which seems to indicate the presence of a regret that he was not permitted to vindicate his genius in some higher manner. At that time portrait-painting became so much of a trade, that it was not uncommon for one artist to paint the heads of his subject, and to employ some one else to finish them off. A French writer, treating of the state of the art in England at that time, said: "In England they get up portraits as they manufacture pins; each passes through several hands, one making the head, another the point." One man obtained so much practice in this way, and his loss was so much felt by his brother painters when he died, that Hogarth drew a caricature representing a crowd of artists lamenting his funeral. We have said that portrait-painting may be either the highest or the lowest development of the art. When it is made the vehicle for great and noble pictures: when the genius of a Velasquez, a Van Dyck, a Correggio, a Rembrandt, a Rubens, a Murillo, a Titian, a Reynolds, or a Gainsborough, is employed upon a subject worthy of it—the portrait of some celebrated hero, some statesman, some divine, or some beautiful woman; and where the result is truly a picture—an idealisation of the subject rather than a servile copy—then is portrait-painting not only a most noble branch of art, but it also becomes an invaluable aid to the student of history who desires to probe beneath the surface of things. The main distinction to be drawn is, whether the portrait is a mere piece of decorative furniture, or an artistic picture; and we greatly fear that, if our modern portrait-painters were thus to be classified, nineteen-twentieths of them would have to rank side by side with the upholsterer and the cabinet-maker.

It would be difficult to overrate the extent to which the love for having their portraits taken, which seems to be a characteristic inherent to the British people, has tended to degrade the art. No one can tell how many artists, capable of distinguishing themselves as landscape or historical painters, have been driven by the prevailing influences of fashion and the patronage of the wealthy into a trade which their soul abhorred. To paint a great man or a beautiful woman may be an opportunity for inspiration to the true artist; but to reproduce the coarse features of a purse-proud citizen or the pinguish ugliness of his vulgar wife can be no very agreeable occupation to the painter of refined note. In the earlier part of the last century, when Giles Hussey, an English artist of great promise who had won his laurels abroad, came to practise his art in this country, he found it necessary to succumb to popular taste and to gain his living by painting portraits.

To revert, however, to the history of the art in Great Britain. During the reigns of James and Charles I. Rubens and Van Dyck came over to this country. Peter Paul visited us upon a political mission (for Continental artists sometimes came to be diplomats) in 1629. Whilst he was here, Charles employed him to paint that roof of the banqueting-house in Whitehall, beneath which the royal patron was soon afterwards to pass on the way to the scaffold. For this he was paid 3000*l.* and was knighted. He also painted portraits of Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria. His pupil Van Dyck came over shortly afterwards, and gained a great deal of money by portrait-painting. He also was knighted by

Charles I. With the fall of that monarch, however, came a suspension in the patronage of art. Oliver and his Puritans were more deadly haters of the painted and graven image than even the Protestant Maiden Queen. Oliver, indeed, had his own portrait taken; but ere he consented to sit for it he said to Lely, sternly enough: "Mr. Lely, I desire you will use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me; otherwise I will never pay you a farthing for it." When the Stuarts returned, Lely was appointed portrait-painter to the king, and reigned supreme over the easel in England until Kneller came, in 1674, to dispute the palm with him. Kneller enjoyed the distinguished honour of painting the portraits of ten sovereigns, viz.: Charles II., James II. and his Queen, William and Mary, Anne, George I., Louis XIV., Peter the Great, and the Emperor Charles VI. The beauties of Charles the Second's court which now adorn the walls of Hampton Court, and which were painted for William the Third (not for Charles the Second, as it is sometimes erroneously stated), are monuments worthy of his flattering skill. William the Third knighted him, George the First made him a baronet, and he died rich. Thus it was said that, though art in England was in the most deplorable state, and was languishing for want of patronage, portrait-painting and portrait-painters flourished exceedingly.

According to the opinion of Mr. John Pye (in his excellent work upon the Patronage of British Art), the reign of George the First may be regarded as the culmination period of decadence in English Art—if indeed that can be said to have suffered decadence which never existed. This reign (says Mr. Pye) did not produce even a second-rate painter. Horace Walpole, in his memoirs, remarks that then the arts had sunk to the lowest ebb in Great Britain; and the remuneration was as low as the art itself. Sir James Thornhill (who was court-painter at the time) painted Greenwich Hospital at the rate of 3*l.* per square yard of ceiling, and 1*l.* for the same superficies of wall. The same artist was also paid 25*s.* per yard for the staircase in the hall of the South Sea Company, and 40*s.* per yard for the dome of St. Paul's.

Sir James Thornhill, who was Hogarth's father-in-law, also painted portraits, although his work upon the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral and at the refectory and saloon of Greenwich Hospital prove him to have been capable of becoming a great historical painter. William Hogarth, whose career began about the year 1730 and lasted until his death in 1764, was perhaps the founder of that school of British moralist painters of which Wilkie, and in the present day Paed and Mulready, are such worthy disciples. It was during Hogarth's career that the germs of the Royal Academy began to manifest themselves.

And this seems the place to record that in the opinion of very many thoughtful well-wishers to the Fine Arts the influence of academies has been pernicious rather than advantageous. It has been asserted that it tends to cliquism, and the attendant evils of intrigue and partiality; that it disposes artists to depend too much upon court favour; that, in fact, it makes academicians who are very much of the courtier and very little of the artist. It must be admitted that the past history of the Royal Academy gives but too cogent reasons in support of this uncharitable assertion; but whether that must be the natural effect of an academy is another question. Other branches of human knowledge have been able to flourish all the more for similar institutions, and that even under "the cold shade" of aristocratic patronage. Why not art? On the other hand, it must be admitted that the exhibitions which have been conducted under the auspices of the Royal Academy have been productive of an infinite amount of good to artists who, but for them, might have pined in obscurity, or at best have only obtained a late popularity through the difficult channels of the dealer's shop and the auction-room. Haydon, who was animated by the most rabid, and, we believe, unreasoning hatred against the Royal Academy, wrote a pamphlet on "Academies of Art (more particularly the Royal Academy); and their pernicious effect on the Genius of Europe." What sense he attached to the words "Genius of Europe"—whether he intended them to apply to himself, we cannot precisely say; but it is certain that in this pamphlet he indulged in the most unmitigated invective against the institution of

academies, fortifying himself by a speech of Sir Walter Scott (which, if true, gives us but a poor idea of that author's sense or modesty), to the effect that artists should be like literary men—"fight their way to the public, as *Egmont* and *Thane* done." This Haydon calls "a noble sentiment, and worthy of Scott." It is said that Hogarth opposed the institution of the Royal Academy; but, if so, he only did so as one of the founders of the Incorporated Society of Artists, from which the founders of the Academy seceded.

At any rate, it is certain that the notion of founding an Academy for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts was not a new one. The elegant and philosophic Evelyn had devoted his thoughtful mind to the concoction of a scheme of this kind which deserves quotation. The passage will be found in his "Sculptura":

It is proposed that a house be taken, with a sufficient number of rooms, two contiguous to each other, for drawing and modelling from life; one for architecture and perspective; one for drawing from plaster; one for receiving the works of the school; one for the exhibition of them; and others for a house-keeper and servants.

That some fine pictures, casts, bustoes, bas-reliefs, intaglias, antiquity, history, architecture, drawings, and prints, be purchased.

That there be professors of anatomy, geometry, perspective, architecture, and such other sciences as are necessary to a painter, sculptor, or architect.

That the professors do read lectures at stated times on constituent parts of their several arts; the resources on which they are founded, and the precision and immutability of the objects of true taste, with proper cautions against all caprice and affectation.

That living models be provided of different characters, to stand five nights in the week.

That every professor do present the Academy with a piece of his performance at admission.

That no scholar draw from the life till he has gone through the previous classes, and given proof of his capacity.

That a certain number of medals be annually given to such students as shall distinguish themselves most.

That every student, after he has practised a certain time, and given some proofs of his ability, may be a candidate for a fellowship.

That such of the Fellows as choose to travel to Rome to complete their studies, do make a composition from some given subject, as a proof of their ability. He who shall obtain the preference shall be sent with a salary sufficient to maintain him decently a certain time, during which he is to be employed in copying pictures, antique statues, or bas-reliefs, drawing from ancient fragments, or such new structures as may advance his art, such pieces to be the property of the society.

That other medals of greater value, or some badges of distinction, be given publicly to those who shall manifest uncommon excellence.

That some professors should be well skilled in ornaments, fruit, flowers, birds, beasts, &c., that may instruct the students in these subjects, which are of great use in our manufactories.

That drawing-masters for such schools as may be wanted in several parts of the kingdom be appointed by the professors under the seal of the Academy.

That a housekeeper shall continually reside at the Academy, to keep everything in order, and not suffer any piece to go out of the house without a proper warrant.

But many Academies were already in existence. The Academy of St. Luke, at Venice (the earliest regular association for the encouragement of the Fine Arts), dated as far back as 1345. Louis XIV. founded the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture at Paris in 1648. The Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture was founded in Vienna in 1705. Several European countries had therefore gone in advance of England, which had not so much as a private school of design, when, in 1711, a private academy was opened in London under the presidency of Sir Godfrey Kneller. We have not been able to meet with any account of this undertaking beyond the fact that it was soon dissolved. Hogarth, in an article supposed to have been written about 1760, dismissed it very briefly with a statement that "Jealousies arose, parties were formed; and, the president and his adherents having found themselves comically represented marching in ridiculous procession round the walls of their room, the first proprietors put a padlock on the door; and the rest, by their right as subscribers, did the same, and so ended the academy." We must admit that this statement is not very intelligible; but it is all that we have been able to gather respecting Kneller's Academy.

The next attempt was by Sir James Thornhill, who set up an academy in his house at Covent-garden, and gave tickets of admission upon application. The necessity to apply, however,

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disgusted many persons, and a band of malcontents, headed by Mr. Vandrebanks, took an old meeting-house, and attempted to attract subscribers by hiring a female model for drawings from the life. Hogarth, however, relates that after a few years, "the treasurer having sunk the subscription-money, the lamp, stove, &c. were seized for rent, and there was an end of that concern." Next upon the list comes Hogarth himself, who, "thinking that an academy, if conducted on moderate principles, would be useful," proposed that "a number of artists should enter into a subscription for the hire of a place large enough to admit of thirty or forty persons drawing after a naked figure." This led to the engagement of a room in Peter's-court, St. Martin's-lane, and the academy here formed lasted for some time. Here it was that (according to Mr. Pye) "most of the English artists of the reign of George II. and of the early part of the reign of George III. received the rudiments of education in the art of design." It is sometimes stated that, before coming to Peter's-court, the Society of Incorporated Artists (for thus they subsequently termed themselves) held their meetings at the house of Peter Hyde, an artist, in Greyhound-court, between Milford-lane and Arundel-street, Strand, under the direction of Mr. Moser, afterwards the first Keeper of the Royal Academy. However, they were in Peter's-court by 1739, and there they held periodical meetings, and had a committee to manage their affairs. This committee was eventually the cause of their ruin, as will presently be seen. Reynolds joined them soon after his return to England in 1752. On the 21st of April 1760 the first exhibition was held in the great room in the Adelphi, belonging to the Society of Arts.

Did we not anticipate an early opportunity of doing full justice to the invaluable labours of the Society of Arts and its founder, Mr. Shipley, in every branch, not only of the useful, but even the fine arts, we might pause for a moment to dwell upon the encouragement which the Society of Artists received from that excellent society. Suffice it now to say that the encouragement which they now extended to the artists was most opportune. Mr. Pye relates that public taste was at that time getting so degraded that the most ridiculous imitations of the great masters were sold as originals at the auctions, and were purchased at high prices. The comedian Foote, in his whimsical farce "Taste," ridiculed the evil with great humour. The opening of an exhibition of genuine paintings, under the sanction of a respectable society, could not but be beneficial to the public taste.

We should not, however, omit to record that five years before the occurrence of this exhibition, namely in 1755, the society had received important recognition and offers of assistance from the Dilettante Society, a body of gentlemen who had visited Italy, and who combined for the furtherance of artistic and antiquarian undertakings. At that time a paper was put forward suggesting that the Society of Artists should be turned into a Royal Academy, to consist of a president, thirty directors, fellows and scholars. This paper was signed by twenty-five gentlemen, from among whom may be named George Moser (afterwards Keeper of the Academy), Louis Francis Roubiliac, Thomas Hudson (the portrait-painter), Robert Strange, and Joshua Reynolds. With a view to carrying out the scheme the Dilettante Society (which was mainly composed of persons of character and influence) tendered its aid; but the artists, fearing that if they were to accept that offer their independence would be compromised, sturdily refused to have anything to do with the society.

It has been said that the first notion of instituting a periodical exhibition of works of art was taken from the Foundling Hospital, a charity which had been enriched by many donations from artists—which donations were occasionally exhibited to the public, and drew admiring crowds. We think, however, that it is scarcely necessary to confine the origin of the exhibition in the Adelphi to any one source; similar exhibitions had already been held abroad, and the eagerness with which the public thronged whenever the galleries of the wealthy were thrown open to them was a sufficient guarantee of the success of the experiment.

The exhibition of 1760 was perfectly successful. One hundred and thirty works were exhibited by sixty-nine artists. In the catalogue we find the names of Morland (the father of George), Reynolds, and the two Wilsons, Benjamin and

Richard. Among the sculptors stands the name of Roubiliac, and the engravers could boast of Woollett and Strange. No charge was made for admission to the exhibition; but the catalogue was sold for sixpence. Although the purchase of a catalogue was not compulsory, 6582 sixpences were derived from that source.

With wealth comes trouble; no sooner did the society find itself in the possession of funds than the members began to squabble about the application of it. Nor was this all; some of the members began to be nice, and objected to the gratuitous admission of the vulgar to their exhibition. "Great inconvenience (said they) had resulted from inferior people crowding the exhibition-rooms last year;" and so the Catalogue, forsooth, must be a shilling, and no person to be admitted without one. This, however, did not quite suit the liberal views which the Society of Arts had formed upon the subject. They had offered the convenience of their room quite as much for the good of the people as for the profit of the artists; and consequently, when the latter urged that "the mob" were "disqualified by their stations and education for judging of statuary and painting," the society replied that it was precisely to remedy that defect in the popular mind that it wished to have the exhibition free. So the end of the business was that a part of the artists, disgusted with the inflexibility of the Society of Arts upon this point, hired a room from an auctioneer in Spring-gardens, and held their next exhibition at that place; the remainder held a rival exhibition upon the old terms at the room of the Society of Arts. It is only fair to the seceders to admit that they announced that the proceeds of their exhibition were to be applied in relief of the distressed, as also did the exhibitors at the Society of Arts. At the latter sixty-five exhibited, among whom were R. E. Pine, Cozens, and R. Cosway; Nollekens was among the sculptors. In 1762, the Society in Spring-gardens tried a new experiment, namely, to sell all the unsold pictures by auction; but this failed, and was never afterwards repeated. This year, another exhibition, consisting entirely of sign-boards, was held in Bow-street, Covent-garden; and when we remember that Mr. Samuel Wale, R.A., and one of the founders of the Royal Academy, was by profession a sign-painter, we shall cease to wonder at the exalted position which that branch of the art occupied in those days. This, indeed, was designed by Mr. Bonnel Thornton (at whose house this curious exhibition was held), as a skit or joke at the expense of the rival societies. The catalogue is curious enough, and some of the items may be amusing:

No. 9. "The Irish Arms," by Patrick O'Blaney. N.B. Captain Terence O'Cutter stood for them. This sign represents a pair of extremely thick legs, in white stockings and black gaiters. No. 12. "The Scotch Fiddle," by M'Pherson. Done from himself. The figure of a Highlander sitting under a tree, enjoying that greatest of pleasures, scratching where it itches.

It is hinted that Hogarth was not innocent of complicity in this piece of jocosity.

The rival societies continued to exhibit side by side for some years. In 1765, the Spring-gardens Society obtained a charter of incorporation, when the roll of declaration was signed by 211 members, including all the most conspicuous and rising painters, sculptors, and engravers in the country. This charter was their ruin. Some of the Fellows had resolved upon taking up a more public position, and moved the directors accordingly. One party among them had resolved upon the formation of a regular Royal Academy; whilst another, and by far the larger, was for remaining quiet as they were. The directors now (who by the rules of the society ought to have resigned annually) had grown so accustomed to their places, through the neglect of the members, that they refused to abdicate. A case representing their conduct was laid before the Attorney-General, who at once gave it against the directors; who contumaciously refused to defer to the very opinion which they had invited. This proved too much for the temper of the persons composing the main body of the society, who at once held a meeting and elected sixteen Fellows to supersede that number of the old directors. Sir Joshua Reynolds was among the ejected directors. Directly after this took place, the eight directors who remained behind tendered their resignation to the society, thus making the total number of seceders twenty-four. This final secession took place in November 1768, and one month afterwards the seceding directors

constituted themselves into the body which is now called the Royal Academy. That they were enabled to adopt this title with the full sanction of George III. is by many attributed to the influence which West had with that monarch. West was one of the seceding (not the ejected) directors, and there can be no doubt that all his influence was exercised in favour of the new academy. In proof of this, we may cite a story told about a portrait of the sovereign painted by West. Kirby, the president of the Incorporated Society, being in the presence of his Majesty shortly after the secession of the twenty-four directors, suggested that this portrait should be exhibited at the exhibition of the society. "No," said the King, "it must go to my exhibition"—meaning the exhibition of the Royal Academy. Poor Kirby was thunderstruck, and the downfall of the Incorporated Society dated from that moment. It finally died in 1780, eleven years after the establishment of the Academy. It has been asserted, we are well aware, in some quarters, that one cause of the dissension was that Chambers and Payne, being both architects and both of great influence in the society, were desirous of appropriating some of the funds for architectural purposes. We have not, however, been able to discover any evidence in support of that hypothesis; and it is perfectly clear that, although Chambers was one of the seceding members, Payne was not. Another story, however, has been related by way of accounting for the dissensions which broke up the Incorporated Society. It is stated that in 1768 the society got up an exhibition for the King of Denmark; and it was understood that only the King himself, and those distinguished persons to whom tickets should be issued for his use, should have admission. Very much to the disgust of the members of the society, however, Mr. Chambers, one of the directors, obtained twelve tickets for his friends, who were accordingly admitted, although persons of the first consequence in the realm had been refused the favour. We can very well believe that this took place, but not that it was the cause of the discontent in the society. It must be taken as rather indicative of a discontented state of things, in which the directors and general members were at open war, than as the prime cause of that state of things. Others have alleged that the quarrel arose from the right which the committee arrogated to itself of hanging the pictures of the members as they pleased.

We put it to the reader, however, to decide whether the facts which we have related do not suffice to prove our assertion that the Royal Academy was founded upon dissension and intrigue. It must be admitted, moreover, that their conduct during that dissension and intrigue does not reflect much credit upon the founders of the Academy. They had violated the laws of the society to which they belonged, and by whose aid they had risen into importance; they had broken the implied contract which they had made when they took office, to preserve the constitution of the society; and when the society took measures to punish their conduct, they arrogantly separated themselves from the main body, and made use of their personal interest with the sovereign to injure and to crush the persons whom they had betrayed. Could any conduct be more perfidious? Nor is this all. The seceding directors were charged by the society which they had betrayed with a crime of yet blacker die. In order to conceal the facts of the case certain leaves from the minute-book of the Incorporated Society had been torn away and destroyed, and the members did not hesitate to accuse the directors of being privy to the fact. Haydon declares that the favour of the King was estranged from the Incorporated Society by the assertion of their enemies that they were a set of revolutionary malcontents—a very grave charge indeed in the eyes of George III.; the same writer, moreover, comments in strong terms upon the conduct of the seceding directors. "They had violated (says he) their honour to the Attorney-General of the kingdom."

It has been urged by the partial biographers of Sir Joshua Reynolds that he did not meddle with this affair, and that he cannot therefore be held to be in any way blameable for what took place. What are the facts, however? So little was he mixed up in the affair that, when the seceding directors met to elect their president, their unanimous choice fell upon him: so little had he to do with the business that, although he openly professed to be disgusted with the quarrel, and declared that he would not exhibit his pic-

tures with either party, no sooner was the rupture effected than he declared himself upon the stronger side, and sent four pictures to the Royal Academy exhibition of 1769. We cannot, therefore, consent to echo the assertion which has been so often made, that Reynolds was guiltless of all complicity in the intrigues which led up to the catastrophe which has been narrated. Haydon says that "Reynolds was guilty of great meanness."

A list of the original members of the Royal Academy may be interesting to the reader, if only that he may see how many, or rather how few, of them were persons of any position in the arts:

John Baker.
George Barret.
Francisco Bartolozzi.
Agostino Carlini.
Charles Catton.
Mason Chamberlain.
William Chambers.
Baptist Cipriani.
Francis Cotes.
Nathaniel Dance.
Thomas Gainsborough.
John Gwyn.
Francis Hayman.
Nathaniel Hone.
Angelica Kauffman.
Jeremiah Meyer.
George Michael Moser.

Mary Moser.
F. Milner Newton.
Edward Penny.
Sir Joshua Reynolds.
John Richards.
Thomas Sandby.
Paul Sandby.
Dominick Serres.
Peter Toms.
William Tyler.
Samuel Wale.
Benjamin West.
Richard Wilson.
Joseph Wilton.
Richard Yenn.
Francis Zuccarelli.

In all thirty-three individuals, not more than six of whom are known beyond the circle of curious connoisseurs. The Royal Diploma enabling the academy to take the title of Royal Academy of Arts restricted the number of academicians to forty, which number was afterwards filled up. It has been pointed out by Strangé that the twenty-four seceding directors secured a majority to themselves by confining the number of academicians to forty. How fitted, or rather how unfitted, this body was to represent the dignity of the arts may be gathered from the fact that this list composed "historical, landscape, portrait, miniature, flower, enamel, and coach painters, die-engravers, chasers, architects, sculptors, and a bricklayer to the Board of Audience." Such was the constitution of the Royal Academy. Sir Joshua Reynolds was elected president, Chambers was made treasurer, Newton secretary, Moser the keeper; Penny, Professor of Painting; and Dr. Hunter, Professor of Anatomy. Soon afterwards Dr. Johnson was appointed Professor of Ancient Literature; and Goldsmith, Professor of Ancient History—the latter being succeeded by Gibbon. These offices were, however, entirely honorary. Poor Goldy, on receiving intelligence of the honour that had been done him, said that it was like giving ruffles to a man who wanted a shirt, adding that he esteemed it rather as a compliment to the Academy than a benefit to himself. In point of fact, the only substantial advantage derivable from the appointment was the certainty of an invitation to the annual dinner. James Boswell even was not excluded from the honours paid to his illustrious friends; for he also had an appointment in connection with the Academy namely, that of Foreign Secretary.

This seems to be the proper place to add a few biographical facts illustrative of the career of Reynolds, the first president, we might almost call him the founder, of the Academy. He was born at Plympton, in Devonshire, a little village about five miles from Plymouth, on the 16th of July 1723. His father was in holy orders, but was not, as Northcote has erroneously asserted, the rector of Plympton St. Mary. He was, however, the master of Plympton Grammar School, and had once been Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. Reynolds's father intended him for the medical profession; but the inner impulse of the boy was clearly towards art. When he was but twelve years old he painted his first portrait, which, if not a very advanced work of art, must certainly have been a curious example of the triumph of genius over difficulty, for it was painted upon a piece of canvass which had been part of a boat sail, and with the common paint used for painting ships and boats. It is stated that this relic is still in existence, and in the possession of Mr. Boger, of Wolsdon, the descendant and representative of the Rev. Thomas Smart, who was the original of the picture. The Rev. Samuel Reynolds seems to have been a sensible man, for he soon made up his mind to give up his own project and follow the indications of nature. Joshua was sent up to London in 1740, to study the art of his adoption under

Hudson, one of the leading portrait-painters of the time. The latter was not long, however, in discovering that instead of a pupil he had got a master; he grew jealous of his pupil, a quarrel ensued, and Joshua retired to Devonshire, after a sojourn of between two and three years in Hudson's studio. His next master was William Gandy of Exeter, who is reputed to have been an excellent portrait-painter. William Gandy was the son of James Gandy, a favourite pupil of Van Dyck. Northcote says of William: "There is little reason to doubt that he might have been the greatest painter of his time if he had not been his own greatest enemy; for I have seen several fine heads of his painting, particularly one of the Rev. John Gilbert, Vicar of St. Andrew's, Plymouth, and another of the Rev. Nath. Harding, a famous Dissenting Minister of Plymouth." It seems uncertain whether Reynolds did not return to Hudson some time before the death of his father, which took place in 1746, when he certainly returned to Devonshire to take care of his sisters. This was the period at which he became acquainted with his first patron, Lord Edgecumbe, and also with Captain (afterwards Viscount) Keppel, who, being appointed to command a squadron in the Mediterranean, persuaded young Reynolds to join him in his cruise. Such a tempting opportunity for visiting Italy could not be neglected. They sailed from Plymouth in the Centurion on the 11th of May 1749. Reynolds met with a severe accident in Malta, which detained him several months in that island. Afterwards he went to Leghorn, and thence to Rome. Here he occupied himself almost exclusively with the study of the great works of Raphael and Michael Angelo. Very few original works came from his pencil during that period; indeed, we are not aware that anything remains to distinguish it but a couple of caricatures, at the expense of the English students, travellers, and connoisseurs whom he found at Rome. One day, whilst he was studying in the Vatican, he caught the severe cold which was the cause of his deafness. In 1752 he returned to England and soon afterwards joined the Society of Artists. He settled in London, and became famous as a portrait-painter. He became intimate with Johnson, Goldsmith, and Burke, and assisted them in the formation of the Literary Club in 1764, of which he remained an honoured member to the time of his death. During the rest of his life he devoted himself exclusively to his art and to the benefit of the Royal Academy, until, by the intrigues of certain discontented members, his presidential chair became uncomfortable to him. He never married; and left the bulk of his large fortune, which he had contrived to amass, to his niece, Miss Palmer, who was married within a year of his death to Lord Inchiquin, afterwards Marquis of Thomond. He died on the 23rd of February 1792, full of honour, leaving behind him a reputation which will bear comparison with any that has been achieved since painting was an art.

Thus far the biographical facts which mark the outline of Reynolds's career. In scrutinising his character more closely, we cannot award to him that credit for perfection which all his biographers insist upon claiming for him. We regard his conduct in the formation of the Academy as by no means devoid of blame; nor can we accord an entire admiration to the facility with which he adapted the pursuit of his art to the prevailing fashion of his time. It is true that all his portraits are great pictures, but he was a portrait-painter for all that; the man who could have rivalled the finest works of Correggio and Titian sacrificed his genius upon the petty altar of human vanity. It is impossible, moreover, to overlook the fact that Reynolds treated his art very much as if it were a trade. His biographer tells us that directly he had saved a little money he spent it all in setting up his carriage and in furnishing his studio in a very sumptuous manner, so as to make it more agreeable to his fashionable sitters. All this may have been very shrewd and prudent in a worldly sense; but it belongs rather to the tradesman than the artist, and it betrays a man more anxious to become a fashionable portrait-painter than to take that dignified position which is due to the highest quality of genius. It is to be feared also that Reynolds was somewhat jealous of the reputation of Gainsborough, by many esteemed to be his equal if not his superior. All agree in stating that a coolness existed between these masters; and, although the biographers of Reynolds insist that this was entirely owing to the capricious temper

of Gainsborough, we cannot help thinking that something may have been due to the enigmatical bearing of the President of the Royal Academy towards one who felt himself to belong to the same rank of art with himself. There is a story about Reynolds having sat to Gainsborough for a portrait which was never completed; and it has been alleged that this was owing to the fact that Reynolds did not express a wish to take Gainsborough's portrait in return. Northcote hints that Sir Joshua told him as much, and even asserts that he added that he had no intention of painting Gainsborough. All that we can say is that, if this story be true, it gives some clue to the want of sympathy between Sir Joshua Reynolds and the poor portrait-painter of Bath. From the slight sketch of his character, given by Mr. Thicknesse, who was for many years his patron, we gather that Gainsborough was a man of a very timid and sensitive disposition; that the nervousness and timidity of his character drove him to the use of wine, from which he "borrowed a little courage;" that, as a necessary consequence of this disposition, he was proud and very prone to take offence. Remembering this, and Sir Joshua's own admission, that he had no intention of taking Gainsborough's portrait, it is not only possible but probable that this touchy son of genius was offended at what he considered a failure in the reciprocity of the compliment. It is only fair, however, to record that Sir Joshua always entertained the greatest admiration for Gainsborough's genius, and that he devoted one of his most celebrated academy discourses to a profound critical appreciation of his merits.

The intimacy which existed between Sir Joshua Reynolds and the members of the Literary Club has begotten a suspicion in the minds of some that the President of the Royal Academy was not really the author of his own discourses, but that either Johnson or Burke, or it may be both, rendered him assistance in the composition of them. If this really were the case, Sir Joshua Reynolds would be neither the first nor last great man who has strutted in borrowed plumes; and, indeed, we need not travel very far in the present day to discover exalted personages who do not disdain to found reputations upon the labours of obscure individuals. The question is a very important one, and requires a thorough sifting before any satisfactory conclusion can be determined upon. Our present impression, however, is that the suspicion thus cast does an injustice to the memory of Sir Joshua. In the first place, it should be observed that in his own time, when the accusation was capable of being pushed home, and when both Johnson and Burke were alive either to confirm or contradict it, this statement was never brought forward. On the contrary, we have the direct evidence of Boswell that once, when Reynolds had composed a discourse for delivery at the Royal Academy, he read it over to Johnson, and received the warm encomiums of the great man: "It is very well, Master Reynolds," said he, "very well, indeed; but they won't understand it." Had Johnson really had anything to do with it, he would not have been guilty of such a petty piece of charlatanism as to praise his own composition. There is one piece of evidence upon which the supporters of the borrowed-plume hypothesis very much rely, but which we cannot admit as conclusive, or even important. This is a document which was printed for the first time in the biography of Haydon. It is a memorandum in the handwriting of Sir Joshua, giving an account of his quarrel with the Academy about the end of his career. It has been observed, and with truth, that the style, and even the grammar of this composition, is altogether unworthy of the man who could compose the fifteen discourses which are generally attributed to him. We know, however, that even the most correct writers will commit inaccuracies, and even blunders of the worst description, when they take no pains with the form of their composition, and merely write a note which is intended for private perusal. This is an inconsistency which is easily explained, and that it is very common must be within the knowledge of every one. It may very well be that Reynolds, having enjoyed the constant society of Johnson, acquired something of what is now known as "the Johnsonian style;" but that does not make him a plagiarist, or even entitle us to accuse him of having had recourse to Johnson's assistance. The following passage, taken at hazard from his first discourse, will serve to show how far he adopted the Johnsonian style of

composition. He is speaking of the necessity for education to a connoisseur, and illustrates his argument by this sonorous-worded simile :

Even the eye, however perfect in itself, is often unable to distinguish between two diamonds, though the experienced jeweller will be amazed at its blindness; not considering that there was a time when he himself could not have been able to pronounce which of the two was the most perfect, and that his own power of discrimination was acquired by slow and imperceptible degrees.

Here is Johnson's manner, without his accuracy—Johnson's sounding phrase, without the perfection of style which distinguishes every composition of the great philologist. That sentence which speaks of "the most perfect" of two objects could never have passed beneath his chastening pen. That Sir Joshua was not devoid of very considerable literary powers, and could write very much better than the memorandum printed in Haydon's biography, is abundantly clear from the testimony of all his contemporaries. That he wrote several papers in *The Idler* has never been doubted; indeed, the fact was frequently corroborated in Johnson's time. The papers which are attributed to him are Nov. 76, 79, and 82. That he prided himself not a little upon his literary culture may be gathered from his own declaration that "he can never be a great artist who is grossly illiterate." It is a noticeable fact, however, that Burke in his Eulogy of him, written shortly after his death, whilst he speaks warmly of his genius as a painter, does not so much as refer to his pretensions as a writer. As for the manner in which Sir Joshua delivered his discourses, it is upon record that he read them in a painfully monotonous and tiresome tone of voice. Northcote relates a meaningless anecdote of him, to the effect that, after one of his discourses was completed, a certain Lord C— came up to him and said: "Sir Joshua, you read your discourse in so low a tone, that I could not distinguish one word you said," to which the President replied (in our opinion very improperly): "That, my lord, was to my advantage."

Sir Joshua Reynolds was a very popular man among his friends, and he had but few enemies. He and Johnson became acquainted at a time when neither of them was very high in the world, and their friendship endured to the last. There is a good story told of the two, that upon an occasion when they were visiting their friends the Misses Cotterell, in Castle-street, Cavendish-square, the Duchess of Argyll and some ladies of title came in, and the attention of the hostesses became somewhat diverted from the young philosophers; whereupon Johnson, feeling very indignant at what he conceived to be a slight, and thinking that it might have been put upon them on account of the mean appearance of their apparel, addressed Reynolds across the room in a loud tone of voice and in these words: "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were to work as hard as we could?" This was said with the view of making the fashionable visitors suppose that they were common mechanics. That he was a great favourite among the members of the literary club is evident from the gentle manner in which Goldsmith dealt with him in his poem "Retaliation." Whilst exposing every one else to the polished arrows of his wit, of Reynolds he could only say:

Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,
He has not left a wiser or better behind;
His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
Still born to improve us in every part,
His pencil our faces, his manners our heart:
To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering,—
When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;
When they talk'd of their Raffaeles, Correggios,
and stuff,
He shifted his trumpet and only took snuff.

These lines must acquire a double interest in our eyes when we remember that they were the last poor Goldy ever wrote. He had sketched the whole club, and was about to put a finishing touch to the work by dashing in an outline of himself, when death came and wrote his "finis" upon the page.

No man was ever more considered by the general public during his lifetime than Reynolds. He was a public character. Foreign princes even vied with each other in doing him honour. Catherine the Second of Russia sent him a gold snuffbox with diamonds, and ordered a picture of him. He painted "The Infant Hercules" for her, and his executors received 1500 guineas for it after his death. During his life, his discourses

received the honour of translation into French and Italian. His studio was the resort of all the flower of English society, and, as he said of himself, he painted two generations of the beauties of England. When he died, his pall was borne to St. Paul's Cathedral by three dukes, two marquises, and five other noblemen. The shops were shut upon the day of his funeral, and people gave themselves up, as it were, to a general mourning.

And, if ever man deserved a great reputation by dint of hard and conscientious labour, it was Joshua Reynolds. To labour was his maxim during life, and labouring he lived, so long as his failing powers permitted him. As Johnson said of Pope, he laboured first to get a reputation, and afterwards he laboured to keep it. Of his art he said himself that it is "neither a divine gift, so neither is it a mechanical trade," but that it was based upon principles which might be ascertained by labour. So great was his faith in the efficacy of study that he even thought that genius was to be acquired by it. It was in reference to his belief in this that Dean Barnard wrote:—

Thou say'st not only skill is gain'd,
But genius too may be attain'd
By studious imitation.

It is recorded of him that so industrious were his habits that he never suffered a day to pass without doing something in his art. So earnest was he in the pursuit of truth, and so determined to leave no way untried that seemed at all likely to conduct him to it, that it is recorded of him that whilst he was engaged in searching for the method used by the Venetian painters, he destroyed several valuable old pictures in the course of his inquiries. With reference to other points in his character, it may be mentioned that he was charitable, being a great patron of such of his brother artists as stood in need of aid; and that he was much beloved in his own family. Summing up in one short sentence the position which Reynolds occupied in his art, we may quote an eloquent sentence from the pen of the able and unfortunate Haydon:

The genius of Reynolds broke like a sunbeam upon the darkness of his age. He not only eclipsed all his competitors in his own province, but the light of his taste penetrated the whole atmosphere of art. The conceptions of his pencil were rich, glowing, and graceful; uniting in his style the colouring of Titian, the grace of Correggio, and the vigour of Rembrandt. His broad masculine touch, his glorious gemmy surface, his rich tones, his graceful turn of the head, will ever be a source of instruction to the artist, let him practise in whatever style he may. It is impossible for any man to look at a picture of Sir Joshua's without benefit, instruction, and delight.

Perhaps, with the exception of the Commemoration of Reynolds in 1813 (which will be mentioned in its turn), Englishmen have never had so good an opportunity of judging of the real merit of the first President of the Royal Academy as they have at the present moment. The collection of his works now brought together at the Manchester Exhibition is in every way worthy of him. There will be found some of the finest portraits he ever painted, pictures which will challenge comparison with the choicest works of Velasquez and of Van Dyck. There are his portraits of Frank Hayman, of Archbishop Markham, of the Honourable Mrs. Tollemache as Miranda, of Lady Althorp, of himself in his robes as Doctor of Civil Law, of Archbishop Robinson, of the Duke of Portland, of the Braddyl Family, of Sir W. Chambers, of the Rev. J. Reynolds, of young Wynn, of Lady Jane Halliday, of the Countess of Dartmouth, of Lady Hamilton, of Miss Farren as Comedy, of Lady Francis Cole, of Sir Richard Worsley, of Mrs. Hartley, of Giuseppe Marchi, of Sam Foote, of Lord Althorp, of Georgiana Countess Althorp and her daughter. There, too, is his "Puck" and the "Strawberry Girl," and "The Captive." There, too, is the "Thais," erroneously described (among the many other blunders of which the catalogue is guilty) as being a portrait of Miss Emily Bertie. There, too, is a portrait of a negro, against which is a sagacious query that it may be Dr. Johnson's servant Frank Barber; as if Reynolds himself had not a black servant to paint from. In this fine collection of our great master every phase of his genius is well represented; and we pity the man who, after an examination, does not arrive at the conclusion that we have reason to be proud of him as an Englishman.

To return, however, to the history of the Academy. The issue of the royal diploma, entitling the body to the prefix "Royal," was speedily fol-

lowed by the publication of the laws. Some of these gave dire offence to the great body of artists, and betrayed a feeling of exclusiveness little worthy of an institution founded for the general benefit of art. In a pamphlet called "The Earwig; or, Old Women's Remarks on the Present Exhibition of Pictures of the Royal Academy" (1781), much of the blame of this was laid upon Zoffany and De Loutherbourg (the King's portrait-painter), both of whom were anxious to exclude the works of any artist who should exhibit any work in any other exhibition. The obnoxious law was as follows:—"Whosoever exhibits with any other society at the time that his works are exhibited in the exhibition of the Royal Academy shall neither be admitted as a candidate for an associate, nor his performances received the following year." The high crime and misdemeanour of exhibiting at any other exhibition amounted not only, therefore, to absolute disqualification for entrance into the Academy, but had also a prospective effect, and brought down condign punishment for the future upon the head of the offender. Another most illiberal law (which is only now modified in part) was the exclusion of engravers from the Academy. At one time no engraver could become a member; even now they can only become associates. Strange said that this law was framed to exclude him. Retaining all the rough independence which he had acquired during his early seafaring life, this excellent engraver had been one of the sturdiest opponents of the intriguers who broke up the Incorporated Society; and, in revenge, the Academicians determined to exclude him. If this really were the case, it was unworthy of Reynolds, even tacitly to acquiesce in such a cowardly and unjust proceeding; but it is no less extraordinary than true that the evil remains to this day unamended. Strange wrote a pamphlet in 1775, called "An Inquiry into the Rise and Establishment of the Royal Academy: a Letter to Lord Bute"—in which he gives his own story about those intrigues which led to the foundation of the Academy. Although a most able man, he certainly contrived to arouse against himself a great number of enemies. For a long time the court was not very friendly to him, owing (so he supposed) to his having been engaged in the Rebellion on behalf of the Pretender. For this and other causes, although he was member of the Royal Academy of Painting in Paris, and of the Academies of Rome, Florence, and Bologna, and Professor of the Royal Academy of Bologna, he nevertheless found it impossible to obtain admission into the English Royal Academy. For a long time they even refused to admit his pictures (for he was a painter as well as an engraver); and when they did accept them, they hung them so that they might as well have been rejected. It is a curious proof of the animus with which this law of exclusion was passed, that immediately afterwards Bartolozzi (who was nothing but an engraver, and, in the opinion of the majority, not to be compared to Strange at that) was elected an Academician. In order to preserve the letter of the law whilst violating the spirit, they required him to paint a picture, and he did so, in order, we suppose, to give a colour to the transaction.

Shortly after his accession, Sir Joshua delivered his first discourse to the Academicians, in which he gave his account of the establishment of the institution. We need hardly say that no traces of the material facts of the case, as we have related them, are to be found in this document. On the contrary, he seems to treat the question entirely *de novo*, and to ignore absolutely the existence not only of the Incorporated Society, but the occurrence of any previous attempt to found an institution for the benefit of art:

It is indeed difficult (says he) to give any reason why an empire like that of Great Britain should so long have wanted an ornament so suitable to its greatness, than that slow progression of things which naturally makes elegance and refinement the last effect of opulence and power—

in other words, why Great Britain should have been so long without a Royal Academy; and, immediately afterwards, he proceeds to answer his own question, by asserting roundly that: "there are at this time a greater number of excellent artists than were ever known before at one period in this nation." True; but were all these "excellent artists" in the Academy? Certainly the list which we have given above does not contain many names which will now be recognisable as such, albeit we do find included the name of Charles Catton, *Master of the Paper Stainers' Company*. A paper-stainer admitted,

whilst George Romney and Smart were excluded!

The first exhibition, which was in 1767, contained 136 works of art, among which by far the larger proportion were portraits. There were also crayons by Bartolozzi and paintings by Cipriani. Gainsborough exhibited four works, Sir Joshua four, Benjamin West two, and Angelica Kauffman four. The Academicians were less exclusive than the Freemasons; and Angelica was not the only lady who attained the distinguished honour of writing R.A. after her name. Miss Mary Moser, a lady who distinguished herself for her flower-painting, was elected about the same time. These, we believe, are the only ladies who have ever been elected Academicians; and yet, in the present day, Mlle. Rosa Bonheur has taken a place far beyond Angelica, and it is scarcely treason to hint that Miss Mitrie has at least equalled the efforts of Miss Mary Moser.

Major rerum mihi nascitur was the motto of the first catalogue, and *Vires acquirit eundo* that of the second; and the latter was very appropriate, if increased numbers be any proof of strength. And this seems as fit a place as any to give a few figures tending to show the rapidity with which the exhibition of the Royal Academy increased. In 1770 the number of works exhibited was 245; in 1771 it was 272; in 1772 it was 385; in 1784 it rose to 539; in 1787 to 666; in 1793 to 856; and in 1798 to 1054. As our readers are aware, it does not very much exceed the last number, even in the present day.

The catalogues were at first arranged with the pictures under the names of the several masters, instead of the present plan, which ranges them according as they hang, and gives an index with cross references to the names of the painters. At first it was a much simpler affair than it is at present; there were none of those quotations which with more or less of good taste now adorn the pages of the catalogue. This custom (which never was so abused as in the present year, when a literary forgery was actually palmed off upon the ignorance of the Academicians for the laudable purpose of hiding a monstrous blunder in art) first came into vogue in the year 1798. The first picture to which a motto was affixed in the catalogue was one of "The Bard, from Gray," by R. Westall:

On a rock whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood.

The charge for the catalogue became a shilling, but nothing extra was charged for the admission. When this change was first made Dr. Johnson (acting, we presume, in his capacity as Professor of Ancient Literature) was requested to prepare an advertisement to that effect—a duty which he executed in his usual magnificent style. "The purpose of this Exhibition (wrote the great lexicographer) is not to enrich the artist, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve public favour is here invited to display his merit." The Academy at first thought it necessary to offer some excuse for levying money at the door, even though they gave a catalogue in return. The catalogue of 1769 contained an advertisement that, "inasmuch as the exhibition was part of the institution of an academy supported by royal munificence, the public might naturally expect to be admitted free; but that it was feared that a money-fee at the door was the only means of keeping out improper persons." Finding, however, that the sums levied at the door seemed likely to become a profitable source of income to the Academy, the members began to look to it as the main support of the institution. For the first twenty years the average net produce was upwards of 1500*l.* per annum, and afterwards it rose to 2500*l.* The Academy was, therefore, enabled at a very early period of its history to dispense with that assistance from the Privy Purse which was promised, and at the present day it has no other source of income than the profit of the exhibition. The receipts for the annual exhibitions now exceed 6000*l.*

How far Johnson's magnificent paragraph about the immunity from contempt which the obscure enjoyed was supported by the facts may be gathered from dissensions which then arose (and which, with more or less of justice, have been revived by each succeeding exhibition down to the present day) respecting the manner in which the hanging committee executed its labours. The time-honoured complaints about hanging "on the line," and "below the line," and "above the line," were then first heard, and they are

household words among us now. The same favouritism to portraits of which the exhibiting artist of 1857 has such good reason to complain (for do not those hideous and unartistic sacrifices to purse-proud vanity occupy all the best places even in this year of grace?) was also written and spoken against. Not only did the portraits occupy all the best places upon the walls, but no works were to be hung in their neighbourhood which could, in the opinion of the painters of them, at all impair their effects. There is a story told of one poor fellow who had a fine marine painting to show, which he was about to hang up in one part of the room. "Stop, Sir," roared one Academician, "you'll hurt my Queen." Abashed at his rebuff, the discomfited painter removed his sea-piece to the other side, when—"Stop, Sir," roars another, "you'll kill my Duchess;" so that, what with the queens and the duchesses, the poor painter, who had only painted the natural Majesty of the Sea, was obliged to carry his picture home again. Some years afterwards, as this portrait-painting cancer seemed to be eating into the bosom of art, an anonymous satirist tried the effect of a little mild rebuke, addressed in the form of "A Poetical Epistle to Sir Joshua Reynolds" (1777), in the preface to which it is asserted that "this seems to be a portrait-painting age." "In former times (continues the author) families of distinction and fortune alone employed the painter in this line of the profession; but in these days the parlour of the tradesman is not considered as a furnished room if the family pictures do not adorn the wainscot; and many a good woman, whose arms are marked with an eternal red from the industry of less prosperous days, considers the bracelet, with the miniature painting, as an ornament necessary to her station in life." Oddly enough, the lines which follow this diatribe against portrait-painting are eulogistic of Sir Joshua, himself a professor of that branch of the art.

During the rest of his career as President of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds exhibited the greatest zeal in its welfare. Between 1767 and 1790 he delivered fifteen discourses, and regularly exhibited every year. In the exhibition of 1773 no less than twelve pictures, out of a total of 385, were by him, and these included the famous "Strawberry Girl," which was sold to Lord Carysfort for fifty guineas. A short time ago, at Mr. Rogers's sale, it fetched two thousand. In 1774 he exhibited thirteen pictures, and in 1784 no less than sixteen. Among the most notable events in connection with the Royal Academy during Sir Joshua Reynolds's presidency was the removal to Somerset-house, where George III. liberally granted them accommodation. This took place in 1771; but in 1780 the Academy was removed into the western wing, to apartments better suited to its wants. In Sir Joshua's Ninth Discourse, delivered immediately after the removal, he referred to the liberality of the King in terms of great satisfaction, and congratulated the Academy on an era which promised to exercise an influence over public taste. During Sir Joshua's presidency, lectures were delivered to the students and exhibiting artists free of expense, and prize medals were awarded. Students were also sent to Rome at the expense of the Academy. Shortly after the establishment of the Academy, that is to say, in the year 1770, Sir Joshua and some of the more eminent members of the Academy made an offer of a public nature, which, if it had been accepted, would have aided at once to identify the Academy with the cause of national progress in the arts. This was nothing less than an offer to decorate St. Paul's Cathedral with Scriptural paintings. Singular and incredible as it may appear, although the artists offered to do their work gratuitously, the authorities of the cathedral refused to countenance the project. At that time all sculptures even were prohibited in the cathedral; and it was with no small difficulty that some fifteen years afterwards the clergy were reconciled to the introduction of graven images into the sanctuary. When Dr. Newton, the Dean, left 500*l.* for a monument, in the hope of showing the way for the introduction of the arts into the sacred precincts, the money was refused, and the monument, admirably executed by Banks, now stands in the church of St. Mary le Bow, Cheap-side. One of the artists who offered to decorate St. Paul's gratuitously was the celebrated James Barry, who, in 1782, was appointed Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy. The talent of this gifted Irishman has never been doubted, and

must be recognised by all who are acquainted with his admirable pictures upon the wall of the great room of the Society of Arts, in which he illustrated the position that the happiness of mankind is promoted in proportion to the cultivation of knowledge. Both in conception and execution these works are of a very high order—so high, indeed, that Canova declared that to see them alone was worth a journey to England. In spite, however, of his great talents, Barry's career in his art was a failure. He was irritated, and perhaps justly so, at seeing men of inferior merit valued before him, and he had not that art with which some men find it convenient to disguise sentiments of that kind. His brusque manners and habit of free-speaking made for him many enemies; and when he began to appeal from the judgment of his brother Academicians, by publishing pamphlets and letters in the newspapers, the indignation which the other members felt against him was unmeasured. John Pye, in his work on the "Patronage of English Art," says that, "instead of confining his attention to the principles of the art, he (Barry), wandered into extrinsic subjects, and made extravagant propositions." Northcote says that Barry abused Reynolds so much in his lectures that Sir Joshua was at last obliged to pretend to be asleep—not a very dignified mode of reply certainly. If this was the case, we can scarcely feel surprised that Joshua took a dislike against the independent Professor of Painting. Sir Joshua, however, would have thought it unworthy of his own genius as an artist to have sanctioned the expulsion from the Academy of a man of real genius for any cause short of absolute dishonour. It was reserved for his successor to perpetrate that infamy. The story is a sad one, and not very creditable to the Academy. A cabal was formed against this poor man, of which the President was the head, and a committee was held, which resulted in his being deprived of his professorial chair, and finally in his expulsion. After this, Barry took the course which a disappointed man of no very great command of temper usually takes; he became a morose misanthrope. He ceased to work at his art, and fell into a state of great poverty. His friends got together 1000*l.* for his benefit; but it was all in vain, and he died in 1806, of a complication of disorders; and when he was dead the nation did tardy honour to his memory, by having him laid out in state. His remains were placed in the great room of the Society of Arts, where they were surrounded by the best legacies of his genius. Amongst others, young Haydon went to gaze upon them there, and it may be that the sight threw across his young mind a dark shadow of his own future fate. Although Barry did not paint much, he wrote a great deal, and almost entirely upon his art. His works have been collected and republished. Among them is a remarkable pamphlet (published in 1799) called "Letter to the Dilettante Society respecting the obtaining of certain matters especially necessary for the improvement of the public taste, and for accomplishing the original views of the Royal Academy of Great Britain." In this pamphlet the scheme of a national gallery was first put forward in the following terms—"I also move that some of our property [meaning the property of the Royal Academy] be laid out in the purchase of some one or more exemplars of ancient art, and a room or rooms to put them in. This beginning (which would come so gracefully and with such peculiar propriety from the Academy) would, with a generous public that only wants such an occasion of diverting its energy, soon fructify and extend to a national gallery."

But the greatest man of whom the Royal Academy could boast, during Sir Joshua's presidency, was decidedly Gainsborough, of whom it may be said that he would have been our greatest portrait-painter if he had not become our greatest landscape-painter. Reynolds, though he doubtless saw in him a dangerous rival before posterity, had the magnanimity to say that, "if ever this nation should produce genius sufficient to acquire to us the honourable distinction of an English school, the name of Gainsborough will be transmitted to posterity as one of the very first of that rising name"—meaning, we suppose, "of that rising school." In another of his discourses we find Sir Joshua marvelling greatly that Gainsborough had been enabled to arrive at great fame without (*creditum Judæis!*) "without the assistance of an academical education, and without travelling in Italy." To one who had "had that honour," travelling in Italy

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must have seemed an indispensable circumstance in the education of a painter. It is true that upon another occasion Sir Joshua admitted that Gainsborough's pictures wanted precision and finish; but when he saw that wonderful "Blue Boy," in which Gainsborough not only demonstrated the fallacy of one of Sir Joshua's own precepts, but also proved that he could finish at least as well as the President himself, the latter must have unsaid his harsh criticism. It was strange, that mutual jealousy and defiance which Gainsborough and Reynolds appear to have entertained towards each other! Each seems to have admired, and each to have feared the other. When Gainsborough was on his deathbed he wrote to Reynolds, thanking him for the good opinion which he had expressed of him in his Discourse. To those who desire a better acquaintance with the very peculiar character of Gainsborough we recommend a perusal of Mr. Thicknesse's curious little sketch of him. Our general impression of him is that he was an eccentric and very shy man, proud, and consequently liable to misconception; that he was hen-pecked, fond of wine, and led a very ill-organised life; finally, that he was accustomed to offend his patrons by causeless outbursts of petulance, which he mistook for spirit. Some of the traits which are told of him are not amiable; for instance, when a customer sent for a picture which had been upon the easel long after it was promised, Gainsborough painted out the face in a fit of humour, and would never consent to touch it again. One of Gainsborough's peculiarities was that he worked a great deal by candle-light, which Reynolds spoke of as "a practice very advantageous and improving to an artist." It is related that when Gainsborough was on the point of death, his last words were, "We are all going to heaven, and Velasquez is of the party."

In the list of landscape-painters who belonged to the Academy about this time, the name of Richard Wilson must certainly be placed next to that of Gainsborough. He also began his career as a portrait-painter; but, having attracted the attention of Vernet, the great French *paysagiste*, whilst at Rome, he resolved to devote himself to landscapes. He was with the Academy from the beginning, and filled the office of librarian at a salary of small amount. His pictures, which attracted but little notice at the time, except among a few discriminating connoisseurs, are now more highly prized. It is another of the accusations which may be justly urged against Reynolds, that he took a personal dislike to Wilson, which is accounted for by the admirers of the former by accusing the latter of uncouth manners.

Among the other notable members of the Academy during the presidency of Reynolds, honourable mention should be made of George Michael Moser, who held the office of keeper until his death in 1783—a most worthy man, and a useful official of the Academy. His merit as an artist, however, chiefly consisted in his skill as a gold-chaser, and he seldom painted upon any other substance than enamel. His daughter Mary, as we have already mentioned, was a good flower-painter; and a room at Frogmore, which she decorated for Queen Charlotte, still remains as a monument of her skill. Nor should we omit to make honourable mention of the Swiss maiden Angelica Kaufmann, who was a graceful artist, for all that wicked Dr. Wolcot suggested that she painted her men

In such a sorry plight.

The members of the Royal Academy not unfrequently occupied the attention of Peter Pindar's muse. Thus we find him, in his "Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians," apostrophising Gainsborough with—

Gainsborough, let me view thy shining labours,
Who, mounted on thy painting throne,
On other brushmen look at contemptuous down,
Like our great admirals on a gang of swabbers.

Peter, with all his devilry, was a man of excellent judgment, and saw men as they were, stripping them by his own shrewd common sense of the cloaks and masks with which fashion and conventionalism had invested them. Thus we find him penetrating the shallow pretensions of West, and telling him:

If thy picture I am forced to blame,
I'll say most handsome things about the frame.

But to Opie, who was Wolcot's especial favourite, for it was who introduced the young artist to the favour of the great, the stern satirist is more gentle:

The Cornish boy, in tin-mines bred,
Whose native genius, like his diamonds, shone
In secret, till chance gave him to the sun.

Opie, the son of a carpenter at Truro, joined the Royal Academy under the auspices of Reynolds. At first he adopted the more lucrative branch of the profession, portrait-painting; but we are told that, "as he would not flatter, he became unfashionable." De Louthborough, the royal portrait-painter, was another celebrity in Reynolds's time. He was a native of Strasbourg, and was a member of the French Academy before he found his way to this country. At first he was scene-painter at the opera-house, and he distinguished himself by inventing a species of moving diorama, which he called by the sonorous Greek name of Eidophusikon. Nollekens, the sculptor, was also an associate of the Academy, and flourished at that time.

We have now arrived at the period in the history of the Royal Academy when that body lost its first and greatest president, Sir Joshua Reynolds. It could have been wished that the divorce had been left entirely to that fate which dissolves all earthly associations; it is a regrettable circumstance that the death of Reynolds was preceded by a rupture with the Academicians, arising from the old malady, cabal and private intrigue. The blame of the transactions out of which the deplorable state of things arose has been very generally attributed to Farrington, whose memory Haydon has branded as being "the most wretched painter, and the most accomplished intriguer, that ever infested the solar system." This man, it is said, was jealous of Reynolds, and got up a cry about influence improperly used—a cry which is very easily raised, and which is sure to find favour with those narrow and short-sighted minds who flatter their own incapacity by believing that they are unjustly kept in the background. Haydon says: "I remember this Farrington perfectly well: he had a keen eye, bald head, white hair, handsome face, and was always whispering; you never saw him upright, or speaking as if his 'tongue did utter what his heart did forge'; but with his head bent down: his eye watching to see if he was seen: one hand up to catch the words, as he was a little deaf, and with the other laying down the law to the humble listener; he was a perfect model for a member of the Venetian senate or Holy Inquisition. He was never in the middle of the room, but always in a corner; and yet, when you approached to speak, with the utmost profundity he put his mouth close to your ear, put one hand up and shaking awfully the finger of the other, to impress any passer by, and you expected some sagacious profundity in morals, politics, or art, he would say in a deep tone of voice, 'We shall have rain.'" This was the man who, although his merits were such that he is now utterly forgotten except for his connection with this unhappy affair, managed to acquire great influence in the Academy. The direct cause of the quarrel has been related as follows by the author of "Testimonials to the Genius of Sir Joshua Reynolds":—

The cause of this misunderstanding was, that in the year 1790 Sir Joshua Reynolds (probably at the request of the Earl of Aylesford) possessed a very anxious desire to procure the vacant professorship for Mr. Bonomi, an Italian architect; but as Mr. Bonomi had not yet been elected an associate, and of course was not an Academician, it became necessary to raise him to those situations in order to qualify him for being a professor. The election proceeded, and Mr. Gilpin was a competitor for the associateship with the Italian architect. The numbers on the ballot proved equal, and the President gave the casting vote in favour of his friend, Mr. Bonomi, who was thereby so far advanced towards the object of his ambition. On the vacancy of an academic seat by the death of Mr. Mayer, Sir Joshua exerted all his influence to obtain it for Bonomi; but a spirit of resistance appeared, owing to some misconception or informality; and Mr. Fuseli was elected by a majority of two to one. The President then quitted the chair with evident dissatisfaction, and on the following day (the 12th of February, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who had for twenty-one years filled the chair of the Royal Academy with honour to himself and his country, sent his letter of resignation to Mr. Richards, the secretary.

We must confess that Sir Joshua's conduct even in this affair, does not appear to have been exactly what it ought to have been. Bonomi was a very fair architect, and built the Duke of Argyll's beautiful mansion of Roseneath, Dumbartonshire; but he was not the sort of man to put into competition with Fuseli. Still we can-

not but feel that it would have been better and more dignified in the Academicians if they had openly and fairly stated to Sir Joshua their reasons for preferring the Swiss painter to the Italian architect, rather than listen to the suggestions of a schemer like Farrington by silently thwarting the old President under the shadow of the ballot-box. Sir Joshua's niece (who was afterwards his heiress), Miss Palmer, writing a letter to a friend, makes a brief reference to this matter, and dismisses it with a young-ladylike toss of the head as "the squabbles and cabals of a set of academicians." Her uncle, however, did not regard the matter so lightly; he resigned the chair about the beginning of 1790. The Academicians, however, were not long in discovering the falseness of the step which they had taken, and lost no time in inviting the offended President to resume the chair; and to this he eventually consented, so far at least as the nominal tenure of his office was concerned. Infirmary was, however, fast creeping over him, and he died on the 23rd of February 1792.

It was expected that when Reynolds died, he would have left such of his own pictures as were then in his possession for the purpose of forming the nucleus of a national collection. This, however, he did not do, but preferred to distribute them among his rich and noble friends.

Benjamin West, who was provisionally elected to the presidency during the last year of Reynolds's life, was fully installed into the office on the death of the latter. He was a native of Pennsylvania, and came to this country in 1763. Upon his establishment here he began to follow the business of a portrait-painter, although he had then gained some celebrity for historical works of merit. George III. patronised him greatly, and it was in a great measure owing to the influence which he enjoyed with that monarch that the seceders from the Incorporated Society were enabled to carry out their plans triumphantly. He was not long in this country before he returned to his historical paintings, of which he has left behind him a vast number, whereby the public can form a very just opinion of his merits. It is a peculiarity rather than a beauty in these works, that he would not represent the characters which he selected for illustration in the costumes which belonged to them. Reversing the meretricious example of the stage of that day, which attired Julius Caesar in a modern uniform and top-boots, he insisted upon painting modern generals in Greek and Roman costumes. This was perhaps pushing the maxima of the classical school *ad absurdum*. During the whole of Reynolds's career he exhibited largely, and took a very prominent part in the doings of the Academy. His inaugural address was delivered on the 24th of March 1792, and is a composition breathing more of the prevailing spirit of loyalty and patriotism than of artistic sentiments and critical knowledge. But when the illness of George III. necessitated the retirement of that monarch into private life West was no longer a favourite at Court. He had been commissioned to ornament Windsor Castle, and, among other things, had designed a chapel which was to be filled with subjects illustrating the progress of Revealed Religion. Had he been suffered to carry this into execution, it is possible that we should have had some few more acres of Sir Benjamin's canvasses to form an opinion upon. As it was, however, the illness of the royal patron brought about a discontinuance of the work, and it was never afterwards resumed. A very full account of this wonderful project is given by Prince Hoare (the artist, dramatist, and foreign secretary of the Royal Academy), in a pamphlet entitled "Academic Annals." The number of the pictures projected by West for this chapel was sixty-five, for the most part of enormous dimensions. The mere enumeration of them reads like the programme for a busily-spent life. After the Peace of Amiens West went to Paris; and when he returned he retired for a short time from the presidency of the Royal Academy, owing to a cabal among the members. During the interval the chair was occupied by James Wyatt, the architect of the Pantheon and of Fonthill Abbey. The retirement of West only lasted, however, a few months, for on the annual election of 1803 the members re-elected him. From that time he appears to have devoted himself to the painting of historical and religious subjects. For his "Christ healing the Sick," now in the National Gallery, the British Institution (which, be it parenthetically observed, had been founded under his auspices) paid 3000*l*. It is a remark-

able circumstance that West, who was no favourite with the Prince Regent, appears to have deluded the rest of his life with unavailing aspirations after Royal favour. In his discourse for 1811, he referred to the not very cheering prospects of art at the time, and said, "But, gentlemen, let us not despair: we have heard from this place of the promise of patronage from the Prince Regent—the propitious light of a morning that will open into perfect day, invigorating the growth of all around; the assurance of a new era to the elevation of the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom." This patronage, we need hardly say, however eagerly expected, never really arrived; unless, indeed, we are to consider the elevation of the Pavilion at Brighton as an honour paid to the fine arts by that refined and enlightened monarch George IV. West died in 1820, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. His biographer, Mr. Galt, winds up a too partial estimate of his character and position with these remarkable words: "His name will be classed with those of Michael Angelo and Raphael." It is true, however, that, with singular simplicity he adds: "He possessed little in common with either."

From among the many internal quarrels which distinguished West's long and (artistically speaking) not remarkably glorious career, we have already indicated the cabal which led to the expulsion of poor Barry. There was also the disturbance in the Council of the Academy which led to the suspension of five of its members—namely, Sir Francis Bourgeois, the Swiss landscape-painter who founded the Dulwich Gallery with the collection which he inherited from Desenfans, the picture-dealer; John Singleton Copley, the American, better known to us as the father of Lord Lyndhurst; Wyatt, the architect; John Yenn; and Sir John Soane, the bricklayer's son, who bequeathed his museum, in Lincoln's-inn-fields, to the use of the public. The most remarkable circumstance in connection with this business was, that it gave occasion for that master of eloquent argument who now vindicates the nobility of genius by the influence with which he sways the House of Peers, to make his maiden effort as a pamphleteer. In a pamphlet entitled "A Concise Vindication of the Conduct of the Five Suspended Members of the Council of the Royal Academy," the future "Nestor of debate" entered into a convincing and eloquent defence of his father and his friends. In this pamphlet it is stated that the offence of the five members consisted in having refused to submit to the interference of the general assembly of the Academicians. It is noticeable also that young Copley also charges Farrington with being an intriguer, and alleges that not only did he conspire against Reynolds, but that he afterwards fomented the growing dissensions between the general body and the Council.

Another curious example of the manner in which the Royal Academy was conducted in West's time is furnished by Haydon. In 1815 it was proposed by Government to spend 500,000*l.* upon a memorial of Waterloo, which should be illustrated by the three decorative arts—painting, sculpture, and architecture. A representation to that effect was made to the Academy, but that body did not deign to reply: and Lord Liverpool, in a fit of disgust, definitively abandoned the project. It was represented at the time that the cause of this extraordinary conduct on the part of the Academy was pique at the neglect with which Government had treated a memorial which had been sent in some time before, embodying the opinions of the Academicians as to the best manner of advancing high art. So that for the sake of a petty whim a splendid opportunity was lost to art!

From among the more notable artists whose works shed glory upon the Academy during West's presidency, we may select the following: James Northcote was the pupil, and biographer of Reynolds, but it must be confessed that little of his master's genius descended upon him. It has been written of him that he "desired to be written critic, fabulist, biographer, and historic painter; but most of his criticism is erroneous, most of his fables borrowed, his biographical narration is torpid and cold, and his historic pictures want the calm beauty and loftiness of thought necessary to such compositions." Henry Fuseli, who was chosen Professor of Painting in 1801, and Keeper in 1810, was a native of Zurich. His lectures are celebrated in the literature of art, and his artistic powers are principally known

to us through the medium of his illustrations of Milton. Haydon, who was a pupil during Fuseli's keepership, and who tells a long story in his own egotistical style of how he and some of the other students subscribed for a vase, and how he, in presenting it to Fuseli, made a capital speech, and how some one or other said that he (Haydon) was the right man to present it, seems to have had a good opinion of Fuseli, albeit he speaks of him as "the lion-headed," "the terrible Fuseli." Raimbach, the engraver, in his "Memoirs and Recollections," says that "Fuseli was a man of genius, though not first-rate as a painter." From Opie, who died in 1807, greater things were expected than he accomplished. Haydon attributes his failure to a dependence upon his powers of exertion, without having any solid foundation in the knowledge of his art. This assertion, however, is somewhat singular, when we are informed from other competent sources that Opie's lectures upon the art rank exceedingly high, and are by some favourably compared with those of Fuseli, and even Reynolds. John Jackson, the portrait-painter, a pupil of Sir Joshua, flourished about the same time: Stothard, too, whose labours in the illustration of literature are so well known and justly prized; nor should we omit to mention the humbler labours of the Westalls in the same direction: and William Hilton, the historical painter, who succeeded Fuseli in the keepership of the Academy. Among the sculptors who rose about this time the greatest men were Banks, Chantrey, Westmacott, Flaxman, Rossi, Bacon, and Canova. It is not, perhaps, very generally known that, in addition to his laurels as a sculptor, Chantrey may also take credit to himself for a very considerable amount of success as a portrait-painter. An advertisement by him appeared in the *Sheffield Iris* of the 22nd of April, 1802, asking for custom: "Terms, from two to three guineas." Mr. Holland, the author of the "Memorials of Sir F. Chantrey" has catalogued no less than seventy-two portraits by his hand. A more liberal way of thinking had thrown open cathedral doors for the reception of statuary much wider than they had ever stood before; and the result was naturally an accumulation of Government orders for the benefit of the sculptors. During the five years which intervened between 1798 and 1803 the following important monuments were set up in St. Paul's Cathedral:—the monuments of Capt. Burges and Capt. Westcott by Banks; of Capt. Montagu and Lord Howe, by Flaxman; of Capt. Faulkner and Capt. Mosse and Riou, by Rossi; of Capt. Harvey and Capt. Hull, by John Bacon, jun.; of General Dundas, by the same; of General Abercrombie, by R. Westmacott.

It was in 1808 that the art of sculpture received important aid from the introduction of the Elgin marbles, which were brought over by Lord Elgin at great trouble and expense, and excited the greatest enthusiasm among all true artists. Some few of the Royal Academicians thought it due to their critical acumen to decry them. Payne Knight, who was a great authority upon all matters of learning and taste in those days, pronounced against their authenticity, and declared them to belong to the time of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Haydon and Wilkie, then in their studentship, rushed eagerly to examine them, and the former fell down and worshipped with all the fervour of his enthusiastic nature. Wilkie, however, whose taste did not lie in that direction, was apparently lost in reflection, and, when they left the place in which the magnificent relics were deposited, declared that he had thought of "a capital subject." "Bravo!" cried Haydon: "what is it?" Upon further investigation the "capital subject" turned out to be a scene of boys playing in a garden, some using the garden-engine as an impromptu weapon of offence against the others; whereupon Haydon lectured his friend upon his want of respect for the higher branches of the fine arts, and chid him sorely for daring to think of such a subject in such a presence. Haydon, at the time, wrote a remarkable paper in the *Examiner*, in opposition to the opinion of Mr. Payne Knight. Such was the depreciatory influence the opinion of this gentleman and of others who thought with him exercised upon the value of these relics, that when they came to be sold to Government, they were purchased at a price which left Lord Elgin sixteen thousand pounds out of pocket. Such was the fate of those works which Canova deemed worthy of the only visit which he paid to England.

Not all the great sculptors whom we have named were members of the Academy. Canova was not, although his visit to this country gave the Academy an opportunity of paying a compliment justly due to one of the greatest sculptors that ever existed. John Bacon was an associate from 1770 to his death in 1799. John Flaxman was also a member and also was the first to fill the Professorship of Sculpture when this office was added to the Academy. So well did he fulfil the duties of his office, that his name is almost as well remembered for the admirable lectures which he delivered upon the principles of his art as for the many other splendid monuments of his genius which he left behind him. Thomas Banks was a member, and owed much of his artistic education to the aid which he received from the Academy, enabling him to study at Rome. Chantrey also was an Academician, and he was also a member of the Academies of Rome and Florence.

It was during the Presidency of West (in 1813), that the Directors of the British Institution conceived the happy idea of organising a festival to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds. This was called "The Commemoration of Sir Joshua Reynolds." A collection, amounting to one hundred and thirty, of Reynolds's pictures, was brought together and thrown open to the public. The affair was organised under the patronage of the Prince Regent, and passed off with great éclat. In order that the Royal Academy should not be without some participation in the honour paid to the great departed, Mr. Martin Archer Shee, R.A., wrote a poem upon the occasion, which was also dedicated to the Prince Regent. As a specimen of this remarkable composition we subjoin the following lines:

Next Johnson view, great potentate of mind!
As erst the sage in easy chair reclined,
While Garrick, Burke, and Beauchamp swell'd his strain,
To letters gave the law—in Ivy-lane.

The bathos of the three concluding words is magnificent. Shee, however, had quite a talent for the composition of vapid poetry. Among other efforts in that direction he composed a tragedy called "Alasco," which was denied the honour of representation by the cruelty of the Lord Chamberlain. The pretext for suppressing it was that it contained sentiments of too liberal a nature; but we, after a careful perusal of it from the beginning to the end, have been unable to discover anything so good as a liberal sentiment in it. The probability is, that the Chamberlain was a man of taste and humanity, and wished to save the public the trouble of damning a piece so unutterably bad. Driven from the stage, poor Shee rushed with his tragedy into print, where it still remains for all to form their opinion upon.

Whilst West was occupying the President's chair, some great men in *futuro* were upon the students' benches. David Wilkie was among them; and those who would know something of the eccentric Scotchman in his student form must learn to know him from those pages about him which are the best in Haydon's curious and unequal work. Who has not roared at the notion of Haydon entering Wilkie's bed room, and finding the lanky lad drawing a study from the nude form of his own person as it was reflected in the glass, and saying that it was "capital practice." Haydon describes him as "tall, pale, quiet, with a fine eye, short nose, vulgar, humorous mouth, but great energy of expression. The 'Village Politicians,' which was his first decided success, was painted when he was quite a student. Lord Mansfield had ordered it, and shortly before it was finished he came into the studio of the painter and asked what the price would be. Wilkie, who was modest, stammered out that he hoped his Lordship would not think *twenty-five pounds* too much. "Indeed, but I do, Mr. Wilkie," cried Lord Mansfield, "and so you had better consult your friends." When, however, the friends were consulted they thought the sum too little, and advised Wilkie to ask very much more. Lord Mansfield, however, insisted upon pinning him to the *twenty-five pounds*, pledging his word of honour that he considered it a bargain; and it was only after Wilkie had conceded both the point and the picture that that great lawyer and most penurious man was induced to add a cheque for 30*l.* to the miserable price which he had paid for the masterpiece. Such are the meannesses of great minds!

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It may, perhaps, serve to give a better and clearer notion of the progress of the Royal Academy of Arts during the earlier part of the present century, if we take a short retrospective glance from the point to which we have already brought the history, and give a brief yearly summary of the leading facts from the year 1800 downwards.

That year found Sir Benjamin West in the Presidential chair; Edward Burch was Librarian; J. Richards, Secretary; Joseph Wilton, Keeper; J. Yenn, Treasurer; the Bishop of Limerick, Chaplain; Prince Hoare, Secretary for Foreign Correspondence; Fuseli, Professor of Painting; G. Dance, Professor of Architecture; J. Sheldon, Professor of Anatomy; and Bennet Langton, Professor of Ancient Literature. Among the academicians, the names which have since become the most celebrated are those of Copley, Flaxman, Lawrence, Nollekens, Northcote, Opie, Smirke, Stothard, Shee, Westall, and Zoffany; and in the list of associates we find Philip Reinagle, Soane, and Turner. Turner was elected an associate this very year. The associate engravers were John Brown, Valentine Green, Joseph Collyer, and Anker Smith: the next year, James Fittler was added to this list. There are some great names here; but the greatest of them all was the young artist whose advent to the Academy inaugurated the century, and whose career was its greatest glory until half of that century was spent. Need we say that we refer to Joseph Mallord William Turner, incomparably the greatest of English landscape painters, even if he do not deserve the full measure of the eulogium heaped upon him by his great interpreter, Mr. Ruskin, that he raised the English school of landscape painting to a higher pitch than the same branch of the art had attained at any age or in any country.

A few words upon the career of this great man will scarcely be misplaced here. He was born in the year 1775, in Maiden-lane, Covent-garden. The son of a poor hairdresser, his opportunities for education were not great; nevertheless, he soon contrived to make himself known. When he was only twelve years old, he exhibited two pictures at the Academy Exhibition. Three years afterwards he exhibited a view of "The Archbishop's Palace, Lambeth;" next year, two pictures; in 1794, three pictures; and in 1795, when he was only twenty years old, no less than eleven pictures, one of which was a sea piece. Two years afterwards, he got into the first room—for No. 136 in that year's catalogue was the charming picture of "Moonlight, a Study at Milbank," now included in the collection which he bequeathed to the nation, and valuable in the highest degree as illustrating one of the earlier phases of his genius. From that time he was a constant and extensive contributor to the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. In 1799 he sent eleven pictures; next year he became an associate (as we have already stated); and in 1802 he was elected a Royal Academician. In 1800 he exhibited a series of pictures of Font-hill Abbey, taken by order of Mr. Beckford. In 1808 he was made Professor of Perspective. The last picture which he exhibited was "Queen Mab's Cave," which formed one of the chief attractions of the Exhibition of 1846. This was the 27th picture which he had exhibited. He died in 1851, bequeathing all his property, both in money and pictures, to the nation; the money to found an institution for the relief of decayed artists, the pictures as a priceless addition to the national collection. His eccentric character and his strange mode of life are too well known to need any particular reference here; his retired habits, his peculiar disposition, his contempt for wealth—or rather his preference of fame beyond wealth (evidenced by his refusal during the latter portion of his career to part with his pictures for any consideration)—all these features have been frequently and largely dwelt upon. His career as an artist illuminated the age which had the good fortune to possess him, and the crowning act of his life proves a nobility of character as exalted as it is rare. We regret to say that the nation has hitherto exhibited a very imperfect sense of the invaluable gift which he bestowed upon it. In spite of the express stipulation which he affixed to that gift, no fitting receptacle has yet been provided for his pictures. We have not kept faith with his memory, for the dearest wish of his heart (which undoubtedly was, that such a gallery should be built as would be proper for the display of the national collection) has not yet been realised. Let us hope that this will not long be so, and that we shall soon

see his directions carried out in a manner more worthy of his memory and our own honour.

To return, however, to our brief survey of the career of the Academy. In 1803 Dr. Burney was appointed Professor of Ancient Literature, and the keepership becoming vacant by the death of Joseph Wilton, the sculptor, (who was one of the original members of the Academy), that office was conferred upon Fuseli. It was during the next year that a very scandalous squabble agitated the Academic body. It appears that the president sent in for exhibition a picture upon the subject of Hagar and Ishmael in the Desert, which was at once recognised by one of the Hanging Committee as being very similar to one exhibited twenty-nine years before. Upon further examination it turned out to be precisely the same picture; and, as there was a law in the Academy expressly prohibiting a second exhibition of the same picture, this conduct on the part of the president was justly deemed to be highly reprehensible. West exhibited ten works this year, and consequently there was no need of the fraud. The obnoxious picture figured as No. 318 in the catalogue for 1776, and as No. 211 in that for 1805, and, in the latter, attention was especially called to it by the quotation of the 17th and 18th verses of the 21st chapter of Genesis. The affair would, however, have probably been hushed up, if it had not been for a paragraph which appeared in the *Morning Post*, and in which the president was vehemently attacked. A very animated controversy then took place among the academicians themselves, in which Fuseli and Shee took prominent parts, and the upshot was that West, affecting or really feeling disgust, resigned his presidentship. The defenders of West attributed his *mistake* to ill health, and West himself hinted that the animosity which was excited against him originated in national prejudice; but both assertions are equally inadmissible—the former because it is impossible to believe that any amount of ill-health could cause a man to mistake a picture twenty-seven years old for a recent one; and the latter because any such prejudice, if it had existed at all, would equally have prevented West's election to the presidency. During West's absence, the chair was occupied by Wyatt; but next year West, having returned, was re-elected, although Fuseli, to show his contempt for him, proposed Mary Moser for the office and actually voted for her. The enemies of West attributed his reinstatement to the protection of His Majesty.

In 1805 Thomas Banks, the sculptor, died, and Henry Thomson was elected a Royal Academician. Banks was a sculptor of but moderate qualities, and rated himself much higher than either his contemporaries or posterity have done. He accepted the invitation of Catherine II. to go to Russia, but returned to England after the execution of a single work. His monuments to Captains Westcott and Burgess in St. Paul's Cathedral are better known than admired.

Although not strictly connected with the Royal Academy, it is an anecdote which belongs to this year, and which significantly illustrates the knowledge of art as it then existed among our legislators, that a committee of the House of Commons, after considering the relative merits of the Elgin and Townley marbles, with a view to determining upon the desirability of purchasing them for the British Museum, reported that the latter were, "in a commercial point of view, the more valuable of the two, because they were entire."

In 1806, Soane (afterwards known as the Sir John Soane who bequeathed his museum in Lincoln's-inn-fields for the benefit of the nation) was elected Professor of Architecture, and Opie took the Professorship of Painting. John Landseer, the father of Thomas, the engraver, Charles, and Sir Edwin, became an associate engraver. Next year Sawrey Gilpin (a good animal painter in his day, although now but little known) died, and William Owen, one of the finest portrait-painters of the British school, was made an academician. By some, Owen has been thought superior to Lawrence in the delineation of male heads. His portraits of Lord Stowell and William Pitt are well known. He was subsequently appointed principal portrait-painter to the Prince Regent, and had the courage to refuse the honour of knighthood. In April 1807 Opie died, and received the honours of a public funeral, his remains being attended to St. Paul's by thirty mourning coaches, and a great following of the most distinguished men of the day. It is clear that, in those days, if they had no very great knowledge of art, they had, at any rate, a

deep respect for it. In 1808 (November 5th) Angelica Kauffman, or, as she had then become by marriage, Angelica Kauffman Zucchi, died at Rome. In Prince Hoare's "Academic Annals" (published in 1899) we are told that the account of the loss of this distinguished artist was received in a letter from Dr. Borsi, of Rome, who, after relating the circumstances of her illness and death, proceeds to describe her obsequies, celebrated in the Church of St. Andrea delli Frati, under the direction of the sculptor Canova, and others of her friends: "The Church (wrote Dr. Borsi) was decorated in the manner customary on the interment of those of noble family. At ten in the morning, the corpse was accompanied to the church by two very numerous fraternities, fifty Capuchins and fifty priests. The bier was carried by some of the brotherhood, and the four corners of the pall were supported by four young ladies, dressed suitably to the occasion. The four tassels were held by the four principal members of the Academy of St. Luke. These were followed by the rest of the Academicians and other *virtuosi*, each one with a large wax-taper lighted in his hand. Two pictures painted by the deceased completed the procession." These honours were probably as much attributable to the respect which was felt for the personal character of the fair artist as to the estimation in which her works were held.

The same year (1808) witnessed many changes in the Academy. Turner was elected Professor of Perspective and Henry Tresham was appointed to succeed Opie in the Professorship of Painting. Tresham is reported to have had a good knowledge of art, and he is now principally known by his contributions to Boydell's "Shakspeare Gallery," and the collection of engravings from the ancient masters, which he superintended for Messrs. Longman. Among the associates elected during this year we find the name of James Ward, the celebrated animal painter, who is now the oldest academician. Before becoming a painter, Ward had cultivated mezzotinto engraving, and held the post of mezzotinto engraver to H. R. H. the Prince Regent.

In 1809 Henry Howard and Thomas Philipps were elected academicians. Howard was a classical, religious, and historical painter, and also a portrait painter. The latter succeeded Fuseli in his professorship in 1824. Paul Sandby, one of the original members of the Academy, died. Robert Smirke, jun., the architect and sculptor, the son of Robert Smirke the historical painter (the architect, be it remembered, of the British Museum and the Post-office, and the restorer of York Minster), became an associate during the year.

In 1810 Augustus Wall Callcott, the distinguished landscape painter, was promoted to the dignity of Royal Academician; as also was Nat. Marchant, the principal engraver of seals to his Majesty, and sculptor of gems to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. In order to give some sort of a colour to this scandalous appointment, Marchant exhibited, in the year of his election, a "Portrait of the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Downe, a model in *terra cotta*;" but it may easily be imagined that he did not afterwards contribute very largely to the exhibitions of the Academy. During this year Fuseli was made Professor of Painting, Flaxman of Sculpture, and Sir Anthony Carlisle, the friend and collaborator of John Hunter, was appointed Professor in Anatomy.

In 1811, John Richards, a landscape painter of moderate merit, and one of the original academicians, died, and the names of Sir Francis Bourgeois, J. F. Rigaud, and Zoffany also disappeared from the list; and by the next year the vacancies were filled up by Henry Bone, the enamel painter, Philip Reinagle, Robert Smirke, jun., David Wilkie, James Ward, and Richard (afterwards Sir Richard) Westmacott. It would seem that in this year the Academy began to add the Diploma pictures and sculptures to their annual exhibition, a practice which has since been discontinued. In 1812 De Louthborough died: next year W. Westall and Alfred Edward Chalon, the portrait painter, were made associates. In 1814 Edward Burch, the Librarian, died. He was a medallist and engraver of gems: next year we miss the name of Bartolozzi, the engraver. W. R. Bigg and George Dawe were elected; the former of whom was distinguished for the mediocrity of his talent, and the latter for his somewhat singular career. Dawe began life as an historical painter, but subsequently took to portrait painting. Shortly after his election as an academician (finding, it is supposed, that the

market was overstocked), he left the country suddenly, and was not heard of until he made his appearance at St. Petersburg, where he acquired both fame and fortune. He is also known as the biographer of George Morland.

In 1816 we miss the name of Copley. Edward Bird was elected, who began life as a painter of tea-boards, and finished by painting some very good pictures. His "Good News," "The Blacksmith's Shop," and "The Country Auction," are well known. William Mulready, one of the greatest of our living painters, and one of the brightest ornaments of English art, was also elected an associate. That the exhibition of this year took some colour from the great event of the preceding 18th of June we may judge by the following items in the catalogue:—

19. Portrait of Lord Hill.
23. Waterloo. Final defeat of the French.
28. Portrait of Lieut.-Colonel Walker of the Royal Horse Artillery.
152. Portrait of the Hetman Platoff. By J. Phillips, with horses by James Ward, R.A.
206. The Battle of Waterloo. By D. Dighton.
212. Portrait of Sergeant F. Styles, of the 1st, who took one of the eagles at Waterloo.
275. The Battle of Waterloo, on the eve of the 18th.
519. The Battle of Waterloo.
517. The Battle of Waterloo.
817. A proposed town residence for the Duke of Wellington, in commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo.

Besides an infinite number of portraits of officers who were engaged in the battle, and a vast quantity of designs for "the proposed national monument to commemorate the glorious Battle of Waterloo." As we have before recorded, this monument, which was to be illustrated by the three decorative arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, was never executed—a fact for which posterity has probably much reason to be grateful.

In 1817, Mr. Mulready was elected an academician; and among the new associates we find the honoured name of Francis Chantrey, who was next year made an academician. In 1818 also John Jackson and Henry Raeburn became academicians. Both of these were portrait-painters. Jackson was by some accounted the equal of Lawrence. Haydon says that "Lawrence's flesh had no blood, but Jackson's was flesh and blood." It is not, however, easy to receive this opinion with much respect, when we are told in the same breath that Lawrence was "not a great man!" We are told that Jackson worked with great rapidity; and it is clear that he produced a vast number of pictures. The catalogues of the Royal Academy specify no less than 145 of them, and he must have painted many more. This facility of production probably accounts for the very unequal style of his works, some being execrably bad, and some very good. Raeburn was the Scotch portrait-painter who was subsequently chosen President of the Edinburgh Academy, and was knighted by George IV. when he visited that city in 1822.

The exhibition of 1819 was the *fifty-first* which the Royal Academy had given, and this year regulations for the direction of the exhibitors were prefixed to the catalogue for the first time. One of the most important of these was that which limited the number of works which each contributor was permitted to exhibit to eight—a very salutary regulation, when we remember that some of the academicians themselves (the portrait-painters especially) were in the habit of advertising themselves by means of eleven or even a still greater number of their works. In the same year Mary Lloyd, better known as Mary Moser, the last female academician, died. The next year was an eventful one for the Academy, for William Hilton was made an academician, Constable became an associate, and in the same year died Benjamin West, at his house in Newman-street. Wilkie, in a letter to Haydon, says:

The funeral of our venerable president was very solemn; there was not so many of our nobility as I expected, but the company was highly respectable. As the procession went up the steps, and entered the great west door of St. Paul's, it was really very fine; and as it moved slowly up the long aisle to the choir, I looked round the statue of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in one of the corners of the dome, which seemed to regard us with a look that the immovable stillness of the marble rendered to one's fancy particularly expressive. The funeral service was read by Mr. Wellesley, brother of the Duke of Wellington, who, it seems, had volunteered to officiate on the occasion, and the whole was conducted in a highly respectable manner.

In bidding farewell to West, it is only just to his memory to note that, although he was a man who can scarcely be ranked among the first class

of artists, his election to the presidentship of the Royal Academy was a protest against that fatal principle which has subjected English art to the domineering influence of the portrait-painters. West and the present president are the only two occupants of the chair who have not belonged to that class, which has proved itself so greedy both of power and profit. In one of the most biting of his caricatures, Hogarth has compared English art to a tree having three branches,—historical, landscape, and portrait painting. The first is represented as dried up and withered, receiving no fertilising sustenance whatever; the second is weakly enough, but yet exhibits some signs of vitality; but the third is vigorous and flourishing, and exhibit every sign of the gardener's tender care. With shame we must admit that this caricature only too faithfully described the position of art in England, not only at the time when it was taken, but for some considerable period afterwards. At that time it was rightly said that portrait-painters absorbed all the wealth and employment from the domestic sympathies of one of the most domestic nations on the earth. Happily, it is not so now (and how far that is attributable to the fact that a portrait-painter does not hold the chief place in the Academy it would be curious to inquire); but even in the present day the large number of portraits which disfigure and encumber the walls of the Academy at each annual exhibition is a reproach upon the good taste of the age. Mere offerings to the vanity, or proofs of the folly, of private individuals—bald, unpicturesque likenesses of persons whom posterity will not care a jot about, and which cannot excite the slightest feeling of interest beyond the circles where their originals are known—such pictures cannot be considered works of art; they are simply pieces of furniture. But if the nuisance be great in the present day, what must it have been in former times, when three-fourths of the academicians themselves were portrait-painters? In the exhibition for the year 1829, out of 1131 works exhibited no less than 581 were portraits, more than one-half of the entire. What an incense to human vanity!

As for West himself, when we have stripped him of the virtues with which injudicious friends unwarrantably loaded him, and of the vices which prejudiced enemies unjustly laid to his charge, we shall find him an amiable and excellent man; striving to do good to the best of his ability, which was not very extensive after all; charitable, kind, and helpful to the weak and the struggling. In some respects he was a very ignorant man, and was but imperfectly acquainted with the English language. The editor of Haydon's Autobiography supplies us with an admirable proof both of West's kindness and his ignorance in the following very characteristic letter:—

Newman-street, February 17th, 1814.
Dear Sir,—The business was not adjusted in time for me to draw out money from my banker's before five o'clock this day, or I would have sent it to you; but I hope the enclosed draft of to-morrow's date will be adequate to keep the wolf from your door, and leave your mind in freedom in exercising your talents of acquiring excellence in your profession in painting, of which you have a stock to work upon.—Dear Sir, yours with friendship and sincerity, BENJ. WEST.

P.S. The gout in my right hand has made it difficult for me to write this note intelligible.

When West died Lawrence was elected President without opposition, and portrait-painting was once more supreme. In the letter which we have already quoted, Wilkie gives the following account of the election:

Having assisted thus in the interment of the bones of our late president yesterday, we were this evening assembled to fill his place. The choice, with two exceptions, fell on Sir Thomas Lawrence, who was duly elected President of the Royal Academy. Sir Thomas had heard of the death of Mr. West in Paris, and had made all the haste he could to be present at the funeral, but owing to the delays at Calais by the weather, &c., he was a day too late.

A few words as to the career of Sir Thomas Lawrence. He was born at Bristol, in the year 1769. His father was the landlord of the Bear Inn, at Devizes; and young Lawrence, at a very early age, attracted the attention of the more aristocratic among his father's customers by his precocious talents as an artist. When he was thirteen years old he received the great silver palette from the Society of Arts, with an additional present of five guineas, for a copy in crayons of Raffaele's "Transfiguration." In 1787 he came to London and received much kind encouragement from Sir Joshua

Reynolds. The same year he exhibited some pictures at the Royal Academy, and in 1791 he was elected an associate. The rule of the Academy was that no one should be elected an associate when under the age of twenty-four; but that rule was set aside, or rather suspended, on Lawrence's account. By some this was attributed to the influence of the King, with whom Lawrence was a great favourite. Peter Pindar gives some countenance to this notion by his poem "On the Rights of Kings," in which he thus apostrophises the academicians, who are supposed to have rebelled against the admission of Lawrence:

Go, Sirs, with halbers round your wretched necks,
Which some contrition for your crime bespeaks;
And much-offended Majesty implore,
Say, piteous, kneeling in the royal view,—
"Have pity on a sad and abandoned crew,
And we, great King, will sin no more.
Forgive, dread Sir, the crying sin,
And Mister Lawrence shall come in."

Nor was this the only law, to all others inflexible, which was set aside for the special benefit of this favourite of fortune. The Dilettanti Society, then presided over by Sir Joseph Banks, was in need of a portrait-painter, and, young Lawrence being chosen, it was thought desirable that he should at the same time be elected a member. There was, however, a standing rule of the Society that no one should be elected who had not crossed the Alps; but this rule was suspended, and Lawrence duly made a member. After the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he was nominated portrait-painter to his Majesty, and to be painted by Lawrence soon became the fashion of the day. His fine bearing, handsome person, and courtly manners had doubtless something to do with this; but his genius had more. So handsome a man was Lawrence, that when this country had to endure the humiliating spectacle of the heir apparent to the Crown endeavouring, and in vain, to brand his own wife as the vilest of her sex, he was chosen as one of the objects of suspicion. Whilst that which was misnamed "the Delicate Investigation" was proceeding, Lawrence had to make an affidavit to clear himself of a crime which by the law of England is construed as high treason. Haydon, who had no great love for Lawrence, states that he and Sir George Beaumont were the two most perfect gentlemen he ever saw. "Both were naturally irritable and waspish," says the most irritable and waspish autobiographer that ever put pen to paper; "but both controlling every feeling which is incompatible with good feeling." Commenting upon the choice of Lawrence for the presidentship, Haydon says: "the election of Sir Thomas to the Chair of the Royal Academy was a blow to High Art it has never recovered and never will, unless, indeed, the opportunity be seized by the members of the Academy—unless the historical painter, the sculptor, the architect, the low life, or landscape artist make a stand, and bring in, as they ought, some man of genius in some one of these walks, to the exclusion of any portrait-painter, whoever he may be. If they do not, they will sign the death-warrant of the arts in England." Let us hope that the present state of the Academy is a proof that Haydon's omen is averted; but, in the mean time, let us note that this very same croaker speaks of Lawrence as "the only man since Vandyke who has detailed without destroying the beauty of a face." It would, perhaps, be more like the truth to say that he ennobled the features whilst he preserved the likeness; for no one knew better than he how to spiritualise the most commonplace original. Never was there a more graceful pencil than his; never did painter so thoroughly possess the art of raising his subject to a level with his genius. Less skilful as a colourist than Sir Joshua, and almost always wrong in his drawing, he knew how to hide every fault beneath the consummate beauty of his composition. In his female portraits he was especially successful, and it is in those that the faults of his drawing are chiefly apparent. By the ordinary rules of proportion, his subjects appear to be at least ten feet high; yet they seem perfect. What can be more exquisite than that well-known drawing of Mrs. Wolff—that one with the

* Mrs. Wolff was a favourite subject with Lawrence. He painted several portraits of her. The drawing in question was exhibited after his death. She was the wife of Mr. Jens Wolff, the Danish Consul. She was separated from her husband, and lived on terms of great intimacy with the family of Lawrence, who was strongly attached to her. Scandal connected their names together very closely; but Lawrence's biographer (Mr. Williams) warmly repudiates the suggestion, and insists upon it that friendship was the only tie which bound them together.

poodle-dog and a child clasping her feet—and yet what more inaccurate? It is the very perfection of aerial grace. Haydon refers to this want of accuracy, and attributes it to affectation: "He affects (says he) to be careless in subordinate parts, but it is not the carelessness of conscious power; it is the carelessness of intention." Without stopping to inquire what that enigmatical opinion may signify, we shall content ourselves with quoting Haydon against himself, in proof of Lawrence's real superiority: "Certainly"—this was written after Lawrence's death—"certainly there is no man left who thinks it worth while, if he were able, to devote his powers to the elevation of commonplace faces. He was suited to the age, and the age to him. He flattered its vanities, pampered its weaknesses, and met its meretricious taste. His men were all gentlemen, with an air of fashion, and the dandyism of high life; his women were delicate, but not modest—beautiful, but not natural. They appear to look that they may be looked at, and to languish for the sake of sympathy. They have not that air of virtue and of breeding which ever sat upon the women of Reynolds." In spite of the spirit of detraction which inspires every line of this bitter emanation from a bitter heart, it is impossible to avoid perceiving the respect which Haydon felt for the genius of Lawrence, even against his own free will. Surely it is no mean quality in a poetic artist to possess the power of ennobling commonplace subjects. Surely, too, Haydon was guilty of some inconsistency when, in the same breath with which he complained of the supreme influence of portrait-painters, he hinted that it was possible that there were some who could paint like Lawrence, if they only had the will. Such an attack as that which we have quoted is the highest form of compliment, and let us remember that it was this very assailant who set the man whom he assails upon a level with Vandyk.

In the same year that witnessed Lawrence's elevation to the presidential chair, William Hilton became an academician. He has been described as "the last of a long line of artists, who, from the days of Barry, desired to restore the high historic style of painting." This description is, however, inaccurate; for it would be manifestly unjust to Haydon to refuse to include him in the same class. Hilton undoubtedly painted some fine works, and, although he was not greatly patronised by the world at large, he was much respected by his brother academicians. He was appointed to the keepership after Thomson, who succeeded Fuseli, and when he died at his rooms in the Academy in 1839, he was followed to his grave by most of the members and the students. In 1821 Yenn died, who had filled the office of treasurer for twenty-one years. During the whole period of his membership he appears to have exhibited little beyond a few architectural drawings. William Collins, celebrated as the painter of many charming landscapes and *tableaux de genre*, became an academician, and Abraham Cooper, the historic and portrait-painter. In 1822 Edward Hodges Baily, the pupil of Flaxman, and one of the best sculptors of the present day, was elected; as also was R. Cook, of whom little was known, beyond his illustrations of "The Lady of the Lake" and Sharp's "Classics," until, by a posthumous sale of his works, which occurred but a few months back, it appeared that he himself was the principal patron of his own works. It seems that when they came to the hammer the public did not put quite the same estimation upon them as he had done, for about a hundred pounds sufficed to buy up the whole gallery. By some artists, however, he is accounted to have been a man of great power, having great vigour of conception and execution as a draughtsman. In the same year (1822), Charles Robert Leslie and George Clint were elected associates. The Exhibition Catalogue for 1822 contains some notable pictures; for No. 126 was Wilkie's "Chelsea Pensioners reading the *London Gazette* Extraordinary of Thursday, June 22, 1815, announcing the battle of Waterloo;" and 383 was a "Scene from the Monastery," by an honorary exhibitor of no less note than Sir John Dean Paul, upon whom, probably, but few of our readers have hitherto looked as an artist. In 1823 the changes in the list were as follows:—William Daniell (the illustrator of Indian subjects) had become an academician; Nollekens was dead; Jeffrey Wyatt (who afterwards assumed the name of Wyatville), George Jones and H. W. Pickersgill had been made

associates. Nollekens was a man of sufficient mark to deserve a few words of record. He was an Englishman by birth though of foreign parentage—his father, Joseph Francis Nollekens, the artist, having settled in England during the early part of the eighteenth century. As a sculptor, Nollekens, the son, made a reputation at a very early period of his life; for, when studying at Rome, he had the honour of receiving a gold medal from the Roman Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, this being the first premium ever adjudged by that academy to an English artist. Throughout his life Nollekens was what is called a "canny man;" for he was prudent, never missed an opportunity of advancing his own interests, and made money. His works, without ever rising into the highest grade of art, are nevertheless distinguished for their adherence to nature. They belong more to the antique than to the modern school. His monument to Mrs. Howard is among the most celebrated of the productions of his chisel; but it was from his busts that he earned the greatest amount both of money and fame. Among his many peculiarities should be mentioned a striking disregard for all those social *convenances* which are called manners. Among other stories told of him, is one to the effect that once when King George the Third was sitting for him, he very unceremoniously stuck a pair of compasses into the royal nose, for the purpose of measuring the interval between that feature and the upper part of the face; and that upon another occasion he took the Prince of Wales by the button, and familiarly asked him "How his father did?" adding, by way of comment, "Aye! aye! when he's gone we shall never get such another." He died on the 23rd of April 1823, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

In 1824 the changes were, the disappearance of Sir Henry Raeburn's name from the list, and the election of R. R. Reinagle as an academician. William Withers also was elected an associate. Raeburn's chief title to distinction lay in his portrait-painting, although he exhibited some very fair historical pictures at the Royal Academy. He was elected president of the Royal Academy of Edinburgh, and was knighted by George IV., and appointed first portrait-painter to the king in Scotland, when that monarch visited his northern capital. By some critics he has been pronounced to be "in portraits second to Sir Thomas Lawrence alone." Next year the name of George Dance disappeared, as also that of Fuseli; George Jones became an academician, as also Jeffrey Wyatville; William Etty became associate; and in the place of Sir Anthony Carlisle we find that of Joseph Henry Green, F.R.S., as professor of anatomy. Mr. Dance was the last survivor of the original forty academicians, and was by profession an architect. This will, perhaps, account for the fact that he took no great part in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy; yet he nevertheless displayed great artistic power as the delineator of "Portraits Sketched from the Life since 1793," engravings of which were published in two volumes folio by Daniells. He died at the age of eighty-four. He was the elder brother of Sir Nathaniel Holland, (the latter having changed his name), and their father was the architect of the Mansion-house, in the city of London. The death of Fuseli created a vacancy in the professorship of painting, which was filled up by Thomas Phillips, the portrait-painter. In summing up the character of Fuseli, and the loss which the Academy sustained when he died, we cannot do better than quote the words of Haydon:—"On the whole Fuseli was a great genius, but not a sound genius, and failed to interest the nation by having nothing in his style in common with our national sympathies. The Royal Academy," adds Haydon, "may get a keeper who may be better in handling the chalk, or improving the regulations of its councils, but they will never get another who will have the power to invigorate the conceptions, enlarge the views, or inspire the ambition of the students as Fuseli did. His loss to the Academy," adds Haydon, in very bitterness of spirit, "is great, for there is no one to supply his place as a lecturer, and in a few years so completely will historical painters be extinct, that no lectures will be given. This nest of portrait-painters are thus enjoying the full fruits of their own pernicious supremacy—fruits that Reynolds predicted in his latter days." And then, with that obliquity of vision which renders men sharp-sighted as to the faults of others whilst blind to their own, he adds, "he was an intense egotist, as all mannerists must be."

It is a curious instance of the singular want of consistency in this clever but eccentric man, that, with all this abuse of portrait-painting, No. 308 in the catalogue for this very year is a "Portrait of a Gentleman," by B. R. Haydon. In the list for 1826 we miss the name of William Owen, and find upon the associates those of Francis Danby, William Allan, and H. Perronet Briggs. Owen was chiefly a portrait-painter, and in that branch he attained some eminence. He was a pupil of Catton. His "Village Schoolmistress" has become the subject of a highly popular print. In 1827 Sir Walter Scott was announced as antiquary to the Academy; John Flaxman was dead, and C. R. Leslie, H. W. Pickersgill and W. Wilkins were elected academicians, Edwin Landseer and J. P. Gandy were elected associates, and the name of William Ward is missing from the list of associate engravers. Flaxman was succeeded in the professorship of sculpture by Richard Westmacott. A few biographical notes upon this great sculptor and true artist will not be misplaced. Although descended from an ancient Norfolk family, Flaxman's father kept a shop for the sale of plaster models in New-street, Covent-garden. At a very early age John Flaxman exhibited artistic tendencies, for we find him in his fifteenth year becoming one of the earliest students of the Royal Academy, and in 1770 he exhibited his first subject, a figure of Neptune in wax. This brought him into some notice, yet we find him after this earning a livelihood by modelling for the Wedgewoods, and contributing, by the beauty of his designs, to the success of their pottery-ware. It was not long, however, before his great gifts came to be, universally recognised by the public. He was not thirty years old before he had executed his celebrated monument of Collins, the poet, in Chichester Cathedral. In 1787 he visited Rome, and whilst there produced the two exquisite series of designs from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (engraved by Piroli), the former consisting of thirty-four subjects, and the latter of thirty-nine. At a later period he illustrated *Æschylus*, *Hesiod* and *Dante* in the same manner; and these series of poetic illustrations are considered as illustrating what may be estimated a new discovery in art—the mode of uniting the most correct and beautiful outline-drawing with the most vigorous and definite qualities of sculpture. His many works in this country are too well known to need more than the most general reference. His monument of Lord Mansfield in Westminster Abbey is one of the noblest works of art of which this country can boast. Nor was the expression of his genius confined to the greater class of productions; for his beautiful "Shield of Achilles" tends as much to perpetuate his name as the largest work that ever proceeded from his chisel. Even in literature he proved that a true artist is an artist in anything; for it was his pen that contributed the articles on "Armour," "Basso-Relievo," "Beauty," "Bronze," "Bust," "Composition," "Cast," and "Ceres," in Dr. Rees's *Cyclopædia*. His lectures, delivered as Professor of Sculpture to the Royal Academy, were as much distinguished for their profundity as for their elegance. They were published within three years after his death, with a brief memoir of their author appended. He died in Dec. 1826, and an eloquent eulogium was pronounced upon his memory by Sir Thomas Lawrence at the anniversary meeting on the 11th of the same month. It will serve to give some notion of Flaxman's untiring industry in pursuit of his art when we state, that between the years 1770 and 1827 he exhibited eighty-nine pieces of sculpture; and when we consider the time and labour which such works necessarily cost, we cannot sufficiently admire his productive genius. Haydon, in describing the personal appearance of Flaxman, speaks of "his sparkling old eye and his apish old mouth."

In 1828 we miss the name of W. R. Biggs, and William Wilkins, the antiquary and architect, became an academician. John James Chalon, and Mr., now Sir Charles, Eastlake, the present president, were made associates. In the list of associate engravers we miss the name of Joseph Collyer, and find that of Richard James Lane. Biggs was a painter of what are called "subjects of a domestic nature." His "Shipwrecked Sailor-boy," "Youths relieving a Blind Man," and "Black Monday," have been engraved. He was a friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Collyer was the engraver of many of Sir Joshua's pictures, of whom he was a great

favourite; indeed, it was in consequence of his engraving Reynolds's beautiful picture of "Venus" that he became associate engraver. As a line engraver he possessed great power, as evidenced by his "Review of the Irish Volunteers" after Wheatley, and his portrait of the Rev. Horne Tooke.

In 1829 Etty was made an academician, and Gilbert Stuart Newton became an associate; Charles Turner was made an associate engraver. In 1830 there were great changes: Lawrence was dead, so was George Dawe; Constable was made academician and Charles Robert Cockerell an associate. In this year died also William Hazlitt, the critic, who used occasionally to exhibit works at the Academy as an amateur. The loss of Sir Thomas Lawrence was a heavy one to the Academy, for, portrait-painter as he was, he not only gave a lustre to that association by the brilliancy of his talents, but he had many personal qualifications which specially fitted him for the Presidentship, and the chair was perhaps never more fitly filled than by the noble presence of Sir Thomas Lawrence, tempered as it was by the most refined suavity of manner. That Lawrence has been reproached with too much courtliness we know; but, in justice to him, we should remember that this was the distinguishing feature in society during the age in which he was cast; that, in fact, he was the man for his time. There is, indeed, a charm in this very courtliness which nothing but the wonderful transmuting magic of genius—that power which can convert the basest qualities into gold—could have given; for whilst we are conscious that his portraits cannot be anything else than exaggerations of the originals—whilst we know that the women whom he painted could not have been eight feet high, or the men of supernatural slenderness and stature—yet we cannot but pardon these vices of detail, if only for the airy grace, the exquisite high breeding, in a word, the tone of the whole composition. Haydon might well say that Lawrence was ignorant of perspective and composition; but, as one of his biographers correctly observes: "In truth, the distinguishing characteristic of Sir Thomas's style was the power of conveying a faithful resemblance, with, at the same time, a singularly delicate sense of beauty, grace, elegance and dignity. Rarely, indeed, did he fail to impart to his portraits the refinement of his own mind. No painter who ever lived seems to have dived more deeply into individual character, as conveyed by the conformation of the visage and the expression of the features; and none knew more skillfully how to avail himself of the changeable appearances which they betrayed in those conversations which were dexterously introduced during the sitting, and which destroyed or relaxed a rigidity of muscle assumed on such occasions, and which frequently baffled the utmost ingenuity of the artist." Among painters he is commonly adjudged to have less nature and less breadth than Sir Joshua Reynolds; but in some particular points, such as the hair and eyes, he is excelled by no one. Fuseli said that he painted eyes better than Titian. It is some indication of the advance which portrait-painting had made in public favour, when we find that Sir Thomas's prices were exactly four times those which were asked by Sir Joshua Reynolds. When Sir Thomas Lawrence died, he was buried in great state in St. Paul's Cathedral, and was followed to his grave by the members and connections of his own family, the Royal Academy, deputations from the Society of Painters in Water Colours, the Society of British Artists, the Society of the Artists' General Benevolent Institution, and a large number of general mourners. Among the pall-bearers were the Earl of Aberdeen, the Right Honourable, afterwards Sir Robert Peel, and John Wilson Croker, Esq. George Dawe (the other academician, who died in 1829) has already been mentioned as a portrait-painter, who also painted a few historical subjects. His "Demoniae," which is now in the council-room of the Royal Academy, is one of the best of his works; he also painted a very fine portrait of Miss O'Neill. Of his career in Russia something has already been said.

If Haydon* was right when he characterised

* We have so frequently mentioned the name of Haydon, and quoted his opinions, that although his career has little or nothing to do with the history of the Academy, we cannot avoid expressing some opinion as to the unhappy career of this most eccentric and gifted man. That posterity to which poor Haydon was so fond of appealing, whenever what he was pleased to consider an envious world refused to ratify his own opinion of his own works, has long since pronounced a very definite judgment upon Haydon. There can be no

the election of Lawrence as "a blow to high art it has never recovered," what must he have thought of the election of Sir Martin Shee. His comment upon first hearing the news was short, but expressive: "To think of Shee occupying the throne of Reynolds!" The first idea was that Wilkie was to have been elected to the vacant post, and, if Haydon is to be believed, Wilkie himself expected it. It happened, however, very inopportunistically for Wilkie, that the jealousy of his fellow-academicians was powerfully excited against him at this time by his appointment to be serjeant-painter to the King. The result of the election was that Shee had eighteen votes and Wilkie one, or at most two. "Wilkie," wrote Haydon in his journal, "is a man of the greatest genius, and a hatred of superiority had no small share in adding to the apprehension of the academicians. Wilkie had just that day been appointed the first painter to the King, and this spark was only wanting to explode the magazine. Shee is an Irishman of great plausibility—a speechifying, colloquial, well-informed, pleasant fellow, conscious of no power in art, and very envious of those who have." The following description of the scene at the election, depicted by the same pen, may prove not uninteresting: "In the evening, the academicians rushed in as the time approached, with a heat and fury, and violence and passion, quite a disgrace to the feelings of gentlemen, or even the lowest members of the lowest clubs. So fearful were they of a message from the King that it would be pleasing to his feelings if Wilkie were elected, that, without regular ballot, they made every member write down the name of the man he wished; and at each successive knock they ran down, and hurried their friend above stairs, without allowing him time to take off his great coat. Wilkie had one or two votes,—some tell me one, some the other—and Shee eighteen, the announcements of which was received with a 'hurrah!'"

The year 1831, then, found Shee the president, and Eastlake, the future president, an academician. Haydon boasts, somewhat vain-gloriously, that it was his enthusiasm which fired Sir Charles Eastlake to be a painter. William Frederick Witherington became an associate. These were the only changes which took place. In the list for 1832 we miss the names of John Jackson and Northcote, and find that of Edwin Landseer. William Wyon, the medallist, was elected an associate. John Jackson's skill at portrait-painting has been already mentioned; by some he was esteemed as second only to Lawrence. He had a great facility in copying the works of the old masters. Concerning his portrait of Flaxman, Sir Thomas Lawrence himself said that it was "a great achievement of the English school, and a picture that he was a man gifted with immense natural powers, but he was, at the same time, afflicted with great incapacities for producing works of the highest excellence. The greatest stumbling-block was his immoderate vanity, which soared so far beyond the real level of his merits, that no amount of success, at all proportioned to the real merit of his works, would have satisfied him. Another difficulty was, his unfortunate temper, which estranged from him even his most sincere friends. Another was his intense selfishness. A curious instance of this is to be found in his journal, in which he enters an expression of the pity and contempt he felt for Wilkie, when the latter refused to lend him money; when a reference to the Life of Wilkie shows that he was himself in urgent want of money for the time. Finally, we must refer to Haydon's facility for getting into pecuniary difficulties, which was the consequence of his vanity. How can we possibly sympathise with the penny of a man, who contrived to keep poor upon a professional income ranging from 800*l.* to 1000*l.* per annum, and who was so proud, that he spent the last half-crown he had in the world upon a cab, rather than ride in an omnibus? We know, indeed, of no more pitiable spectacle in the world than that presented in Haydon's journal, where we find him constantly bewailing the ingratitude of the world, yet as constantly trenching upon its good nature. Now begging and fawning, now blustering; at one moment sunk into the lowest depths of despondency, and in the next full of the most extravagant castle-building. His attacks upon the Royal Academy, in the pamphlet entitled, "*Some Enquiry into the Causes which have obstructed the advance of Historical Painting for the last Seventy Years in England*," had perhaps some foundation; but it was sheer vanity in him to suppose that the one thought and aim of the Academy was the suppression of his own fame. No doubt it was a very galling thing, for a man who believed himself to be a great historical-painter, to see the corruption of public taste emptied into the lap of the portrait-painters; but he had no right to treat the latter as "a sort of barbers, who chatter to amuse their customers." It should be remembered that a good portrait-painter is better than a bad historical painter; and, although Haydon cannot justly be termed *bad*, yet it is certain that the generality of his works are the reverse of good, and that he never painted but one first-rate picture in his life, the "Judgment of Solomon." That is, indeed, one of the finest pictures in the English school, and proves, by its surpassing excellence, the curious eccentricity of the painter's genius. It is now, we believe, the property of Sir Edwin Landseer, who bought it in an auction-room for something under seventy pounds. It is true, that it was then in very bad condition, and that the purchaser was at great trouble and expense in restoring it.

ture of which Vandyck might have felt proud to own himself the author." When he died Haydon wrote: "Poor Jackson is gone! A more amiable, inoffensive man never lived. He had a fine eye for colour, but not vast powers, and could not paint women." As for Northcote, there seems to have been a great difference in the estimation in which he was held during his own time, but there are now very few who regard him as otherwise than a painter of very inferior rank. The pictures which he painted for Alderman Boydell's "Shakespeare" are among the best known of his productions; but these are for the most part violent and exaggerative in conception, drawing and colour. It is said that in the latter quality Northcote strove to imitate Sir Joshua; if so, his want of success is conspicuous. Haydon detested Northcote, and permitted his judgment of his personal qualifications to take the colour of his own private prejudice. "The attempts of this little fellow to mortify others," wrote he on one occasion, "are quite amusing; he exists on it. The sparkling delight with which he watches a face when he knows something is coming that will change its expression is beyond anything." Now the fact is, we suspect, that Northcote, who had a shrewd wit and a habit of speaking out his mind rather bluntly, saw through the hollowness of Haydon's own preposterous pretensions, and made no scruple to tell him his mind. Whatever may have been Northcote's real status as an artist, he was unquestionably a very honest and independent little fellow. It is related that, upon one occasion, when the Prince Regent presumed to take a personal liberty with his grey hairs, he rebuked him with such dignity and intrepidity, that "the first gentleman in Europe" was fain to prove his title to the character by making a most ample apology to the painter. So fond was he of the truth, that when a flattering friend attempted to persuade him that he had painted a horse better than Rubens, he took him up sharply with a "D'e take me for an idiot? As well might ye compare me in stature to the Colossus of Rhodes! It is not like Rubens! I fear it is scarcely like a horse!" In order to appreciate the full force of this reply, it should be remembered that Northcote did not exceed five feet in height. Among his other labours, Northcote did good service in the literature of his art; for he wrote many papers in the periodical publication called "The Artist," and also the "Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knight, comprising anecdotes of many distinguished persons, his contemporaries, and a brief analysis of his Discourses." In addition to these, he published "One Hundred Fables, original and selected," embellished with two hundred and eighty engravings on wood, from his own designs, and a "Life of Titian," in two volumes octavo; all very creditable productions. As a talker, possessed of great powers of dry humour, Northcote attained such celebrity, that Hazlitt made his "conversations" the subject of two separate series of papers, one of which appeared in the *New Monthly*, and the second in the *Atlas* newspaper. These were afterwards collected and published in a single volume. Though not fairly to be rated in the first category among artists, we have little doubt, in spite of Haydon's detraction, that Northcote was an able and a worthy man.

The list of 1833 exhibits no change, save the elevation of H. P. Briggs to the rank of academician, and the election of Clarkson Stanfield and Andrew Geddes to that of associate. Next year, we miss the name of Philip Reinagle and find that of Gilbert Stuart Newton among the academicians. Messrs. John Gibson and Thomas Uwins were made associates. Philip Reinagle was an artist of great versatility; for he not only painted dead game, dogs and other sporting subjects, but had also some skill in portrait and landscape painting. Pilkington sums him up well when he says:—"Reinagle may be numbered with those who increased the quantity of pictures without adding anything to the lustre of his school." In 1835, we miss the name of Henry Bone and Stothard; also of James Heath, the associate engraver, finding that of F. R. Lee among the associates. Of Henry Bone, the English school may boast as one of the greatest enamel-painters that ever existed. Beginning life by painting for the trade, Bone determined to carry this branch of art beyond anything that had hitherto been attempted, and after much labour and experiment he succeeded in producing several portraits exhibiting a degree of perfection which

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had never before been attained. Before Bone's time pictures on enamelseldom exceeded the dimensions of a half-a-crown piece; but the first picture which he exhibited was two and a-half inches in height, and shortly afterwards he succeeded in producing a picture representing "A Muse and Cupid," of which the unprecedented dimensions were five inches and a-quarter, by four inches and a-quarter. This picture was engraved by Dagley in 1790. After this, Bone attracted a large measure of attention; honours flowed in apace, and he was successively appointed enamel-painter to George III., George IV., and William IV., and to His Royal Highness the Duke of York. He copied many of Sir Joshua Reynolds's pictures upon enamel on a large scale. After having been an associate of the Academy for ten years, Bone considered that he had a right to the full rank of academician, arguing, and with evident justice, that if an enamel-painter was not excluded from the lower rank, he ought certainly to be eligible for the higher. Meeting with some resistance upon the point, he declared, with great independence of spirit, that he would be an academician or he would retire from the associateship, whereupon the conservatives of the Academy yielded, and Mr. Bone was raised to the rank which he coveted. Bone attained the *acmé* in his branch of art when he succeeded in obtaining a picture of the dimensions of eighteen inches by sixteen. The subject chosen was Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," and when completed the work was sold to Mr. Bowles for two thousand two hundred guineas. Of him, Haydon speaks rather disrespectfully as "Old Bone, the enamel-painter, who has got a nervous twitch and a croaking voice, as if he was always watching a bit of ivory in a furnace, for fear it should crack." The other loss to the Academy, that of Stothard, was a serious one, for though an artist who produced but few regular pictures, no one so richly endowed the literature of this or any other country with the graceful productions of the pencil as he did. Well does he merit the eloquent eulogium of Charles Lamb:

Consummate artist, whose undying name
With classic Rogers shall go down to fame,
Be this thy crowning work! In my young days
How often have I with a child's fond gaze
Pored on the pictured wonders thou hast done:
Clarissa mournful, and prim Grandison!
All Fielding's, Smollett's heroes rose to view;
I saw, and I believed the phantoms true;
But, above all, that most romantic tale
Did o'er my raw credulity prevail,
Where Glums and Gawries wear mysterious things,
That serve at once for jackets and for wings.
Age that enfeebles other men's designs,
But heightens thine, and thy free draught refines.
In several ways distinct you make us feel,
Graceful as Raphael, as Watteau gentle.
Your lights and shades, as Titianesque, we praise,
And warmly wish you Titian's length of days.

Few, however, as his easel-pictures were, they were sufficient to establish his reputation as a painter. "The Canterbury Pilgrims," which is known to all of us, if not by the original, at least through the medium of the engraving, drew forth the warmest encomiums from West and Turner. The largest painting which he ever executed is the splendid idealisation of "Intemperance," which stands upon the grand staircase at Burleigh. To attempt to give anything like an account of Stothard's numerous works illustrative of literature, would be impossible within anything like a reasonable space, and the mere enumeration of them would be tedious. Suffice it to say, that all lovers of beautiful books owe to this remarkable man a lasting debt of gratitude. To the end of his days he held the office of Librarian to the Royal Academy. Haydon describes Stothard as having "a fine head, with silvery hair, hanging brows, and a benignant smile that expresses a happy conception and a perpetual feasting on sweet thoughts." It seemed to be by a sort of fatality that Heath and Stothard died in the same year—the artist whose graceful pencil furnished the design, and the engraver whose skilful burin carried it out and perpetuated it. Heath may, indeed, be said to have written his name across the page of English literature with an iron pen. Stothard and he had been companions from their earliest years; their talents developed themselves side by side, and together they became famous. In the old "Novelists' Magazine" some of their earliest efforts are to be found. Some of Heath's larger works are well-known and greatly admired: such as his "Death of Major Pearson," after West, and "The Dead Soldier," by Wright of Derby. His son Charles is even better known than his father, but this is not the place to speak of him.

In 1836 we find that Gilbert Stuart Newton was dead, and William Allan and Stanfield were made academicians; Messrs. Maclise and Johnson Hart were elected associates; James Fittler, the engraver, was dead, and Samuel Cousins was an associate engraver. Newton was by birth an American; but although he painted with great care, and sometimes, it is said, received high prices for his works, he never attained any very great eminence in his profession. His works are but little known. He died insane. In the same year (1836) Mr. Ewart's Fine Arts Committee was held, for ascertaining the best way of encouraging the Fine Arts. The report of this committee is worth perusing, for many of its suggestions have been adopted. The academicians were examined, and so was Haydon, who testified that portrait-painting was the bane of the Academy. It was a grand opportunity for Haydon to do battle with his enemy, Shee, and he did not neglect to avail himself of it. It was in consequence of this committee that the School of Design was founded, and galleries, museums and local schools of art were recommended. As for the Academy, the committee inclined to the belief that the principle of free competition in art would ultimately triumph over all artificial institutions, and pointed out strongly the ambiguous half-public, half-private character of the Academy, without directly recommending any modification of its constitution.

In March 1837 John Constable died, a name to be placed in the very foremost rank of English artists. Although he has been called the follower of Wilson and Gainsborough, it must be admitted that Constable had a style peculiarly his own,—a style formed in the studio of Nature herself, and under the guiding hand of the great mistress. Without arriving at the golden atmospheres of Knypp, or the "blue distances" of Claude Gellée, there is a freshness and a reality in Constable's landscapes which almost takes them out of the realm of art. It has been said of Constable that he was a true Englishman, for he scorned to seek subjects for his pencil abroad so long as any of the rare and beautiful scenery of his own native land remained unexplored. The consequence is, that there is scarcely a picture by him extant, the subject of which has not been taken from the green lanes and sunny corn-fields of dear old England. It will serve to give some notion of his industry, when we say that the Academy catalogues show that during his membership he exhibited no less than a hundred and three pictures. But the omission of Constable's name is not the only alteration which we perceive in the list of 1837; Sir John Soane also was gone, and C. R. Cockerell was made academician; John Prescott Knight, the present excellent secretary of the Academy, was also made an associate in this year, and Robert Graves became an associate engraver. Sir John Soane, the Professor of Architecture, is better known for his antiquarian knowledge, and the magnificent collection in Lincoln's-inn-fields which he bequeathed for the use of the nation, than for his labours in connection with the Academy. A pamphlet concerning a design for a new House of Lords forms, we believe, the extent of his literary productions. He was succeeded in his professorship by W. Wilkins, Esq. In 1838, the name of William Daniell has disappeared, and those of George Patten and Charles Landseer are added to the list of associates. William Daniell exhibited a vast number of pictures at the Academy during his membership, some of the most admired among which were views taken in India. In 1839 Sir William Beechey and Charles Rossi had gone, and John Peter Deering and F. R. Lee were the new academicians. Ross, now Sir William Charles Ross, David Roberts and Richard Westmacott became associates in this year. Sir William Beechey was distinguished as a portrait-painter, and was high in favour at court; hence the title which was tacked on to his name. He was appointed portrait-painter to Queen Charlotte, and when in 1798 he painted George III. on horseback, reviewing, with the Prince of Wales, the Horse Guards at Hounslow, he was knighted in honour of the occasion. Rossi was a sculptor of merit, but was more remarkable for the quantity than the quality of his productions. In 1840 Thomas Daniell had gone, and William Hilton, the keeper, and Wyattville and William Wilkins; Philip Hardwick was made an associate. The death of Wilkins left the chair of architecture vacant, and it was filled up at once with C. R. Cockerell, Esq. Thomas Daniell, who survived his nephew William, had attained the ripe age of ninety when he was called away. He had

been an academician for forty-one years, and in that time he exhibited a hundred and twenty-two pictures at the Academy exhibition. His works principally consisted of landscapes and of Oriental subjects. He spent many years in India, and his grand work on Oriental scenery, which combines within six volumes folio every variety of Indian scenery to be found between Cape Comorin and the Himalayas, is one of the noblest pieces of illustrative literature extant. Of William Hilton we have already spoken as an historic painter of great merit. Some of his pictures take rank, in the opinion of many, with the finest productions of the British school. He succeeded Fuseli in the keepership, and exercised his office so well that on his death he was followed to the grave by most of the members and the students, and an exhibition of his principal pictures was held at the British Institution the following year. Wyattville and Wilkins were both architects.

In 1841, Solomon Alexander Hart, Daniel Maclise and William Frederick Witherington were made academicians, and Charles Barry, Richard Redgrave and Thomas Webster, associates. In 1842 the names of Chantrey and Wilkie had disappeared, and John James Chalon, David Roberts and Philip Hardwick were made academicians. In Chantrey and Wilkie the Academy lost two of its brightest ornaments. From "The Village Politician," which was the first picture which he exhibited in London (in 1804) down to the "Portrait of Sir Peter Laurie, Alderman," which was his last (in 1841)—to think that an alderman should be the last subject to occupy Wilkie's pencil!—he exhibited sixty pictures, most of them upon better subjects than Sir Peter Laurie. He died at Gibraltar, on his way home from a tour in the East, and his solemn funeral at sea has been taken by Turner for the subject of one of his grandest and most touching pictures. He died on board the *Oriental steamer*, as she lay in Gibraltar Bay, on the 1st of June. The authorities would not allow the body to be landed, for fear of infection, so it was committed to the deep in latitude 36 deg. 20 min.; longitude 6 deg. 42 min.; the burial service having been read by the Rev. James Vaughan, rector of Wroxall, near Bath. Of Chantrey we have already spoken, of his early attempts at portrait-painting, of his great success in the branch of art which he eventually chose, and of his great career. During his membership of the Academy, he exhibited not less than ninety-four works. He died in his sixtieth year, so suddenly that an inquest was deemed necessary. A reporter, one of the old school, who could write in elegant English, gave the following description of the sculptor laying in state, as it were, in his winding-sheet, on the night after the inquest: "In an exquisite little gallery, built for him by Sir John Soane, who always was good when his limits were cramped, lay the body of the great sculptor, his eyes closed, his face calm, but with an expression serene and solemn even in death. Above were wax-lights burning clearly, and all around a collection of the finest casts from the antique. The Laocœon was at his head, the Venus and the Apollo on his right and left, and around the room the Iliuss and the Theseus, and other of the glories of Greece, with one or two of Canova's own casts." He was buried, according to the directions in his will, in the churchyard of his native village, Norton, in North Derbyshire.

In 1846 we find that the names of Sir Aug. Wall Calcott, Robert Smirke and Thomas Phillips have disappeared, and that John Prescott Knight and Charles Landseer (the present secretary) have been made academicians; William Dyce, William Calder Marshall, Alfred Elmore, Thomas Sidney Cooper and William Powell Frith, had been made associates; and James Tibbets Willmore had become an associate engraver in the room of Mr. Bromley. Thomas Phillips was a portrait-painter of high reputation, and succeeded Fuseli in the professorship of painting. Ten of his lectures are published, and will repay perusal. He resigned the professorship some time before his death in favour of Mr. Henry Howard. Smirke was a painter who enjoyed a great reputation in his time, but seems to have now almost faded from the public memory. He was for fifty-three years a member of the Academy, and died in the ninety-fourth year of his age. The longevity of some of these academicians seems fully equal to that of the toughest annuitant. During his fifty-three years of membership, Smirke only exhibited about forty pictures, and none at all during the last thirty years of his life. A eulogistic biographer

says of him, that he "had no great rival before the time of Wilkie." It is probable, therefore, that the advent of the great Scotchman snuffed him out, and that he had the sense to perceive it. In 1847 we miss the name of William Collins, and find that J. R. Herbert and Patrick MacDowell and Thomas Webster have been elected academicians. E. M. Ward, W. E. Frost and P. F. Poole had been elected associates. Collins was celebrated for having produced a multitude of charming little pictures, illustrative of nature and human life in their simplest aspects. In 1848 the name of Henry Howard, the secretary and trustee, has disappeared, and those of Frederick Richard Pickersgill and Sydney Smirke appear among the associates. Howard painted an immense number of pictures in his time, chiefly on historical and religious subjects. He was succeeded in his double office by J. Prescott Knight, Esq., who now honourably fulfils them both. In 1849 Ramsey Richard Reinagle was dead, and C. W. Cope, W. Dyce, elected academicians; the new associates were Robert Thorburn and Augustus Leopold Egg. The Reinagles were an artistic family, for no less than seven male and three female members of it have exhibited at the Academy, and two of the former have been members. Ramsey Richard Reinagle must have well nigh rivalled West in the acreage of the canvas which he covered, for the catalogues of the Royal Academy make mention of no less than two hundred and one pictures by his facile pencil. The subjects which he treated were principally landscapes and portraits. In 1850 Sir Robert Harry Inglis was appointed antiquary to the Academy, this office having apparently been in abeyance since the death of Sir Walter Scott. The name of Sir William Allan had disappeared from the list of academicians, and also those of William Etty and John Peter Deering. Richard Westmacott was elected an academican, and John Henry Foley an associate. Sir William Allan was an historical painter, and painted some pictures of merit, showing a decided preference for subjects connected with Scotch history. Deering was an architect. The great loss to the Academy this year was that of William Etty. The admirable biography of this artist, published by Mr. Gilchrist two years ago, renders it unnecessary to give many particulars of his life. Few have left behind them such landmarks of their career towards fame as Etty did; for though he was what may be called an abundant painter, yet the works which he turned from his easel finished will endure as lasting monuments of his genius. No one ever worked more carefully than Etty, or so diligently sought out Nature to the very end of his life. We are told that, up to within a very short time before his death, he was a constant student at the life school of the Academy. His biographer even asserts that it was his devoted attendance to the life school which aggravated the disease which hurried him to the tomb. In spite of asthma and other disorders, he would persist in breathing the night air and the fog for the pleasure of sitting in his place in the school. Even when he could scarcely stagger along he would go, walking with such difficulty that those who knew nothing of his habits would attribute his unsteadiness to another cause. "The only chance," says Mr. Gilchrist, "which yet remained to Etty of prolonging his life was to forsake his old acquaintances—night fog and heated life academies. This was only to be done by flight from London itself. As long as he remained in Buckingham-street he would not break through this habit: 'If he had to die—might as well die,' he would aver, 'at the Academy as at home.' To the last, though much too ill to attend the schools, and suffering more and more, he was still to be seen ascending the Academy stairs, resting at each half-flight, panting for breath; his head on his arm, that on the stair-rail. Breathless and exhausted, he would reach the school; then, after a while, set to work in full vigour as of old. And a fine study was speedily the result." As a proof of Etty's industry and facility of labour, Mr. Gilchrist computes that not much under two thousand canvases (and panels) and mill-boards bear evidence of Etty's hand. After his death, the contents of his studio were sold, and were found to include above eight hundred Academy studies, of which almost a quarter contained two or more figures.

Sir Martin Shee, the president, died on the 13th Aug. 1850, having held the chair since the death of Lawrence. As he was elected at a time when portrait-painting was at its zenith, we

ought not to bear hard upon the evident disproportion between the talents and position of Shee. He has had his panegyrists and he has had his detractors—full measure of both. The editor to the last edition of "Pilkington's Useful Dictionary" characterised him as "this eminent portrait-painter and poet; second only to Sir Thomas Lawrence as an artist." On the other hand, Haydon designates him as "the most impotent artist in the solar system; a man who, for forty years, has never painted any human creature without making him stand on his tip-toes from sheer ignorance; in short, the great founder of the tip-toe school." Haydon, however, undoubtedly entertained a strong personal prejudice against Shee; and that man can scarcely be considered contemptible of whom Byron could write:

And here let Shee and genius find a place,
Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace;
To guide whose hand, the sister arts combine,
And trace the poet's or the painter's line;
Whose magic tints can bid the canvas glow,
Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow;
While honours doubly merited attend
The poet's rival, but the painter's friend.

The truth is, we believe, that the proper appreciation of Shee's merits lies halfway between the two extremes of opinion. He was a fair portrait-painter, was a very agreeable and courtly gentleman, and was endowed with an elegant and cultivated mind. His poems, like his pictures, certainly do not rise into the highest levels of art; and if they sometimes (as we have before pointed out) fell into depths of bathos, there are occasionally to be found sentences composed with considerable taste, and dictated by the best of feelings. Thus, when he speaks of Reynolds in the following lines, we must certainly regard it as a triumph of good sense over the very natural prejudices of a portrait-painter:—

Behold in lines that rival Nature's glow,
Bright as the sunbeam or celestial bow;
By Time untarnished, and by Genius crowned,
Our British Titian sheds his glory round.
While minor stars their weaker rays combine,
And former lights with feeble radiance shine;
His single beam illumines the graphic skies,
And pours a summer's lustre on our eyes.
In all his works astonished Nature views,
Her silvery splendours and her golden hues;
Sublime in motion, or at rest serene,
Her charms of air and action, all are seen.
There Grace appears in ever-varied forms,
There Vigour animates and Beauty warms;
While Character displayed at every stage
Of transient life, from infancy to age,
Strong in each line asserts the mind's control,
And on the speaking feature stamps the soul.

This, if not poetry, is at any rate very fair rhyming. His "Rhymes on Art" were intended as a sort of invocation to the Government and the public for a larger measure of patronage in favour of artists. His tragedy, "Alasco," was excluded from the stage by the Lord Chamberlain, on account of some passages which were marked as having a political tendency. One of the passages which proved so objectionable to George the Fourth's official was the following:—

But shall I reverence pride, and lust, and rapine?
No. When oppression stains the robe of state,
And power's a whip of scorpions in the hands
Of heathen knaves, to lash the o'erburthened back
Of honest industry, the loyal blood
Will turn to bitterest gall, and th' o'ercharged heart
Explode in excitation.

Upon Shee's death, the votes of the academicians fell upon Mr. Eastlake, who was accordingly placed in the chair, which he now very worthily occupies. Upon his elevation, he received the honour of knighthood from her Majesty, it being apparently imperative that the president of the Royal Academy should bear that rank. No other change took place in the Academy this year, except that James Clarke Hook was made an associate. In 1853, we find Thomas Creswick, Sir John Watson Gordon, Francis Grant, William Calder Marshall and Richard Redgrave elevated to the dignity of academicians, and we miss the name of Wyon, the celebrated medallist. William Boxall, E. W. Cooke, F. Stone, H. Wicks and F. Goodall had become associates, and Lumb Stocks had been made an associate engraver in the place of John Landseer. In 1854 William Powell Frith was made an academican; and John Everett Millais, the coryphæus of the pre-Raphaelite school became an associate. We believe the first picture exhibited by Mr. Millais at the Royal Academy appeared in 1846: "594. Pizarro seizing the Inca of Peru," J. E. Millais. In 1855 the only change was the resolution of the Academy to admit engravers to the highest honours. Mr. Cousens was judiciously chosen as the first academican engraver. The present personnel of the Academy may be gathered from a list which we shall subjoin.

It is now high time that we should say something about the present organisation of the Royal Academy. Since the date of its foundation it has undergone many changes, and the most radical ones have occurred very recently; so recently that the laws, as at present printed, do not offer any reliable guide as to the present regulations of the Academy. We believe, however, that our explanation will be found to comprise even the most recent alterations. The Royal Academy consists of forty academicians (painters, sculptors and architects) and two academican engravers. Until very lately, engravers were only admitted into the Academy as associate engravers; but, thanks to the efforts of some of our leading engravers, and especially of Mr. John Pye (to whose admirable work on the "Patronage of British Art" we confess a heavy debt), this injurious restriction has been removed. There are, moreover, twenty associates (painters, sculptors and architects), and two associate engravers. There are also three associate engravers eligible to become academicians, and four associate engravers of the old class. In the beginning of these Memoirs we gave a list of the original members of the Royal Academy at its foundation; we now subjoin a list of the Academy as it is at present constituted:

HONORARY MEMBERS.

Bishop of Oxford, *Chaplain*.
Lord Macaulay, *Professor of Ancient Literature*.
Henry Hallam, Esq., *Professor of Ancient History*.
Earl Stanhope, F.R.S., P.S.A., *Antiquary*.
Sir George Staunton, Bart., *Secretary for Foreign Correspondence*.

ACADEMICIANS.

Baily, Edward Esq.	Hodges, Leslie, Charles Robert, Esq.
Barry, Sir Charles, Esq.	Landseer, Sir Edwin.
<i>Auditor</i> .	Lee, Frederick Richard, Esq.
Chalon, Alfred Edward, Esq.	Landseer, Charles, Esq., <i>Keeper</i> .
Cooper, Abraham, Esq.	Mulready, William, Esq., <i>Auditor</i> .
Cookerell, Charles Robert, Esq.	MacIise, Daniel, Esq.
Cope, Charles West, Esq.	MacDowell, Patrick, Esq.
Creswick, Thomas, Esq.	Marshall, William Calder, Esq.
Dyce, William, Esq.	Pickersgill, Henry William, Esq., <i>Librarian</i> .
Eastlake, Sir Charles, <i>President and Trustee</i> .	Pickersgill, Frederick Richard, Esq.
Locke, <i>President and Trustee</i> .	Roberts, David, Esq.
Elmore, Alfred, Esq.	Ross, Sir William Charles.
Frith, William Powell, Esq.	Redgrave, Richard, Esq.
Gibson, John, Esq.	Smirke, Sir Robert.
Gordon, Sir John Watson.	Stanfield, Clarkson, Esq.
Grant, Francis, Esq.	Ward, James, Esq.
Hart, Solomon Alexander, Esq.	Witherington, William Frederick, Esq.
Hardwick, Philip, Esq., <i>Treasurer and Trustee</i> .	Webster, Thomas, Esq.
Herbert, John Rogers, Esq.	Westmacott, Richard, Esq., <i>Auditor</i> .
Jones, George, Esq.	Ward, Edward Matthew.
Knight, John Prescott, Esq., <i>Secretary and Trustee</i> .	

In addition to these there have lately been added as

ACADEMICIAN ENGRAVERS.

Cousens, Samuel, Esq.	Doo, George Thomas, Esq.
The associates are:—	
Francis Danby.	William Boxall.
George Patten.	Edward William Cooke.
Thomas Sidney Cooper.	Frank Stone.
William Edward Frost.	Henry Weekes.
Paul Falconer Poole.	Frederick Goodall.
Sydney Smirke.	John Everett Millais.
Robert Thorburn.	John Calcott Horsley.
Augustus Leopold Egg.	George Gilbert Stone.
John Henry Foley, R.A. elect.	John Phillip.
James Clarke Hook.	George Richmond.

The associate engravers of the new class are:—

John Henry Robinson.	Lumb Stocks.
And the associate engravers of the old class are:—	
Richard James Lane.	James Tibbitts Wilmore.
	Robert Graves.

It will be observed that there is a vacancy in each of the last three classes.

The government of the Academy for ordinary purposes rests with the Council, which consists of eight members, four of whom retire annually, and cannot serve again, except in rotation. The General Assembly of the Academicians ratifies or puts a veto upon the acts of the Council; but any alteration of the laws must receive the approval of the Queen, as patron of the Academy. Both the General Assembly and the Council are presided over by the president, who is elected annually. The other superior officers consist of the secretary, who is elected for life; the treasurer

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and the librarian, appointed by the Sovereign; the keeper, who holds his place for life; and three auditors, who are elected annually. The academicians are elected annually out of the associates by ballot, which mode of election is also used in the selection of associates. As soon as there is a vacancy, notice is given to all the members, and a ballot takes place as soon as possible; but when the nominee is ascertained, he does not take rank as an academician until he has finished and presented the diploma work of art which he is bound to present to the Academy. Thus, in the list above, Mr. Foley appears among the associates as R.A. elect, and will remain so until he has finished and presented the customary offering. According to one of the old statutes, the academicians must "all of them be men of fair moral character, of high reputation in their several professions, resident in Great Britain, and not members of any other society of artists established in London." The associates are elected by the academicians, and are selected from among the exhibitors. In addition to the offices already specified, there are five professorships, namely, of Poetry, of Sculpture, of Architecture, of Perspective, and of Anatomy. The present Professor of Painting is Solomon Alexander Hart, Esq., the historical painter. The duties of his professorship, as defined by the laws, are to read annually six lectures in the Royal Academy, "calculated to instruct the students in the principles of composition; to form their taste of design and colouring; to strengthen their judgments; to point out to them the beauties and imperfections of celebrated works of art, and the particular excellencies and defects of great masters; and, finally, to lead them into the readiest and most efficacious paths of study." Richard Westmacott, Esq., is the present Professor of Sculpture, and his duties are to read six lectures annually, "explanatory of the principles of style and form in that art, and its peculiarities of composition." The Architectural Chair is for the moment empty, but the duties are provisionally fulfilled by Sydney Smirke, Esq., and Gilbert Scott, Esq., the author of the recently-published work on Gothic architecture as applied to modern improvements. The duties of this professorship are to read annually six public lectures in the Royal Academy, "calculated to form the taste of the students; to instruct them in the laws and principles of composition; to point out to them the beauties or faults of celebrated productions; to fit them for an unprejudiced study of books on art, and for a critical examination of structures." The Professorship of Perspective is now held by John Prescott Knight, Esq., and his duties are to give annually forty lessons in the Royal Academy, "in which the most useful propositions of geometry, together with the principles of lineal and aerial perspective and sciography (the science of shadows) shall be fully and clearly illustrated." All these professorships must be held by academicians, and during the pleasure of the Sovereign. The lectures are paid for, under a fixed tariff, by the Academy, consistently with that wise and liberal principle which has been adopted, of not putting the student to the smallest item of expense. In addition to these, there is also a Professor of Anatomy, "who shall be elected from among the most eminent men in that branch of science." His duties are to read six public lectures annually, and the office is now held by Richard Partridge, Esq. The rotation in which the lectures are delivered is fixed by rule, and they generally last from November to March. The only restrictions to which the lecturers are submitted within the bounds of their respective subjects, is imposed by the rule that "no comments or criticisms on the opinions or productions of living artists in this country shall be introduced into any of the lectures delivered in the Royal Academy." A very wise and proper regulation. In giving a list of the officials, it would be ingratitude in us to omit the name of Mr. Eyre, the clerk to the Royal Academy, to whose kindness and courtesy in affording us every facility in his power, we are deeply indebted.

We shall now proceed to give a condensed account of the various laws affecting the admission of students. This is one of the noblest and most useful functions of the Academy, and especially so when we remember that all the advantages offered are entirely free of expense to the student, and are paid for out of the private income of the Academy, without the slightest assistance from Government, or indeed of any one else.

When any one applies to become a student, he receives the following instructions for the admission of students:—

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, LONDON.

It is required that every applicant should have attained such a proficiency as will enable him to draw or model well prior to his admission. A superficial acquaintance with anatomy (comprehending a knowledge of the skeleton, and the names, origins, insertions, and uses of at least the first layer of muscles) is indispensable for those who pursue the branches of painting and sculpture. A painter is required to produce, as a specimen of his abilities, a finished drawing in chalk, about two feet high, of an undraped antique statue; or if of the Torso, of the Theseus, or of the Ilyasus, they must be accompanied by a head, hand and foot. A sculptor must send a model, either in the round or in relief, of a similar figure; and an architect, a plan, elevation and section of an original design for a building, and a drawing of an ornament. Prior to the delivery of the specimens the applicant must obtain from the clerk, through the written request of an academician, or other artist of known respectability, a printed form, the blanks of which must be filled up and delivered with his drawings, or model, at the Royal Academy, on or before the 28th of June, or the 28th of December, to be submitted to the first council held in July or January. If approved of, the applicant is entitled to admission as a probationer, and three months are allowed him in which to prepare within the Academy a set of drawings or a model. Should these be considered satisfactory by the council, he will then be admitted as a student of the Royal Academy for seven years, and in the event of his obtaining a medal, he will be constituted a student for life. Those who have been unsuccessful in their first endeavours, can renew their application at any subsequent period, by again going through the prescribed forms. All instruction in the Academy is gratuitous, the student having to find his own materials.

The student first enters the Antique School, where he pursues his studies under the instruction of the keeper and curator till his proficiency in drawing from the round renders him eligible on the approval of the council to enter the Painting School and to draw from life. The Painting School is under the care of the curator, and the instruction given by visitors appointed annually from the most qualified members, the term of each visitorship extending to one month. The models are alternately male and female, and are draped figures. The students must produce a specimen of their ability to colour before they can enter the Painting School. No student who is under twenty, unless married, can draw from the nude female model in the Life School. From drawing the human figure the next and last step is the painting it, permission to do which depends upon the examination of, and approval by, the council of the drawings the student has executed. This school is under the immediate and constant instruction of the visitors appointed, as in the Painting School. Lectures are given by professors in painting, sculpture, architecture, and a valuable course of practical instruction (forty lessons) in perspective and in anatomy, with demonstrations from the living subject, at the King's College Hospital, under the direction of Professor Partridge, all of which, with the exception of the last, the students are required to attend, or they cannot become candidates for the premiums given annually (for premiums see printed list.) The students have the privilege of studying in the Zoological Gardens and the Armoury at the Tower, and a certain number of them are permitted to copy the pictures in the National Gallery. The Academy has established a fund for the purpose of affording relief (in the most private manner) to such students as, from unforeseen circumstances, are in need of pecuniary aid. Students who have obtained gold medals are invited to become candidate for the travellers' studentship, and painters, sculptors, and architects are in succession sent abroad for two years at the cost of the Academy. The student incurs no expense beyond his own working materials, and the only return required by the institution for the professional education which every young man receives, or may receive, is that he should conduct himself as a gentleman, and by industry reflect credit upon the Royal Academy.

The School of Painting is held in the great East-room, which is the chief room at the time of the exhibitions. Under the will of Mrs. Desenfans, the Academy has the privilege of taking such pictures as it chooses from the Dulwich collection for the use of the Painting School. The same document also constituted the Royal Academicians visitors and inspectors of the collection, and provided that a dinner should be

prepared for them on the occasion of their annual visit, stipulating that the plate which she left should be produced on that occasion only. We understand, however, that the master and fellows of the college have contrived to limit this invasion upon their vested rights to the fat of the land to the Council of the Academy only; and they have, therefore, only to supply dinner for twelve instead of for the whole of the academicians. Nor is this all; they have also contrived to arrange matters so as to give a dinner every alternate year, and on the other years a breakfast, which comes less expensive. We hear, however, that if they have construed the will with any lack of liberality in some respects, they have made ample amends by giving it the widest sense where their own interests are concerned; for whereas, under the will, the plate was only to be used on these special occasions, there is a rumour that the master and fellows now use it whenever and wheresoever they think fit. The Life School and Antique Schools are held from six to eight in the evening, the former in the room on the ground-floor which is used for the exhibition of sculpture, and the latter in the first room which faces you on ascending the stairs. The perspective lessons are given in the room to the left; and the lectures are delivered in the great East Room. The Life School is very strictly and properly "tiled in," when there is any drawing from the nude. Visitors may be admitted as a special favour when the subject is a male, but never when a female is posed. The Antique School is well furnished with fine casts, taken from the choicest pieces of sculpture in the world, from which the pupils draw under the superintendence of the curator. Nothing can be simpler, and yet more fitted for their purpose, than the disposition and apparatus of these schools. A few easels to support the drawing-boards, and the lights well disposed so as to show off the object to the best possible advantage, that is the full extent of these preparations. There is nothing to distract the attention; nothing to invite to idleness; nothing, in fact, beyond the strictly necessary. As to what may be the appointments of the Life School, we have nothing to guide us but conjecture. The chaste modesty of the Academy forbade us entering within these sacred precincts, so we can give no definite account of the proceedings of those who seek out the truths of art in *paris naturalibus*. This extreme reticence was probably occasioned by the terrible attacks made upon poor Angelica for "studying" from a Life-guardian—an imputation which the fair artist with difficulty repelled, by proving that the warrior was properly draped.

The premiums offered by the Academy to the students in the schools are numerous and important. We subjoin a list of those which were offered for competition last year, and distributed on the 10th of December. The same list will apply to every year, only premising that the gold medals are offered on alternate years, and the silver medals every year:—

I. A Gold Medal, with the discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the lectures of Barry, Opie and Fuseli, for the best historical picture, in oil colours. The subject to be, The Good Samaritan. The size of the cloth a common half-length, viz., four feet two by three feet four inches; the principal figure to measure not less than two feet in height.—II. A Gold Medal, with the discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the lectures of Flaxman, for the best composition in sculpture. The subject to be, The Good Samaritan. A group in the round. The figures to a scale not less than two feet. The candidates to present their models either baked or cast in plaster.—III. A Gold Medal, with the discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the lectures of Barry, Opie and Fuseli, for the best finished design in architecture. The subject to be, a Design for a National Gallery. The whole comprised in one general and regular composition; the design to be as large as an entire sheet of double elephant will admit, and to consist of a plan, elevation, section and perspective view.—IV. The Turner Gold Medal, for the best landscape, in oil colours. The subject to be an English Landscape. Size: four feet two inches, by three feet four inches.—V. A Silver Medal for the best painting of a figure from the life, in the Life School. N.B.—The candidates must bear in mind that correctness of drawing, combined with good colour, will be considered by the Council as indispensably requisite in all works admitted to competition: and that the premium will be adjudged where drawing and colour are most ably displayed. The size of the figure to be not less than two feet. The visitor will set the model for twelve evenings successively, beginning on Monday, the 29th of June; and again, in another attitude, for twelve evenings successively, beginning on Monday, the 13th of July. Those students alone who are privileged to

paint from the life will be allowed to compete for this premium.—VI. *A Silver Medal* for the best study from the living draped model, size of life, on a kit-cat canvas. The visitor will set the model for twelve mornings successively, beginning on Monday, the 5th of October; and again on Monday, the 19th of October.—VII. *Three Silver Medals* for the best drawings of Academy figures done in the Royal Academy.—VIII. *Three Silver Medals* for the best models (in clay) in bas-relief, of academy figures, done in the Royal Academy.—IX. *Two Silver Medals* for the best accurate-figured drawings of the west front of Spencer-house, with details. Done from actual measurements, carefully finished and washed; to be as large as a whole sheet of double elephant will admit; with a rough outline, giving the dimensions, attested to be their own performance by an academican, or any professor of reputation resident in London. The first medal in each class will be accompanied with a copy of the lectures of the professors, Barry, Opie and Fuseli.—X. *Three Silver Medals* for the best drawings of a statue or group in the antique academy, to be selected and set out by the keeper for that purpose for one month.—XI.—*Three Silver Medals* for the best models (in clay), in the round, of a statue or group in the antique academy, to be selected and set out by the keeper for that purpose for one month. The first medal in the class of drawing will be accompanied with a copy of the lectures of Barry, Opie and Fuseli; and the first medal in the class of sculpture with a copy of Flaxman's lectures, handsomely bound and inscribed.—XII. *A Silver Medal* for a perspective drawing in outline, applied either to a known building (exterior or interior), or to a design.—XIII. *A Silver Medal* for a specimen of sciography, that is, an architectural subject, tinted in Indian ink or sepia, exhibiting the scientific projection of shadows. In the drawings for these medals the process by which the perspective result is obtained must be exhibited.—XIV. *A Silver Medal* will also be given for the best medal die, to be cut in steel, from the head of the Giustiniani Apollo in the Royal Academy. The size to be not less than one inch and a quarter in diameter, to be accompanied with an impression in wax.—XV. *The Ten Pound Premium*, for a drawing or drawings executed in the antique and life schools during the year. They must be delivered in on or before the 19th of December.

All these premiums (with the exception of the Turner medal) are granted out of the private funds of the Academy,—funds, be it remembered, which are derived entirely from its own resources, and are in no way assisted by any extraneous aid. From the same source also come the pensions to which every academican or associate, and every widow of an academican or associate, is entitled to when circumstances require such aid. The Academy also distributes a considerable sum every year in the relief of artists, not members, whose circumstances absolutely require it. As these are private funds privately administered, we refrain from stating amounts, with which the public has no concern. We believe, however, that in every respect they are amply sufficient to meet the required ends.

The two great anniversary festivals of the Academy are the exhibition and the annual dinner. The shilling charged for admission into the former constitute the whole of the income which the Academy has at its disposal, and we believe that these amount upon an average to more than six thousand pounds. It opens in the first week of May, and is too prominent a feature in the London season to render any description of it necessary to our readers. All must be quite familiar with the soft crush and flutter of aristocracy which takes place when the pictorial novelties of the season are thrown open to the gaze of the public; and whether we enjoy the exclusive privilege of the private view, or are compelled to take our chance with the crowd during the first week, the vision is still the same—a confused panorama of well-dressed people whispering criticisms (of more or less value) in each other's ears, and amid a glare of gorgeous gilt frames, staring "Portraits of a Gentleman," and other such-like vanities, a modest sprinkling of works of real and enduring merit. The dinner is a much more exclusive affair. Originally it was the custom to hold a general dinner of the Academy previous to the exhibition; now the practice is for the academicians to give a dinner to such wealthy

and distinguished persons as are likely to benefit the arts by their patronage. The rule on this subject is, that "the guests shall consist exclusively of persons in distinguished situations of high rank, distinguished students, or known patrons of the arts." The festivity is held in the rooms of the Royal Academy after the pictures have been hung for exhibition, and before the private view, by which means it is hoped that the aforesaid distinguished persons, animated by the exciting influences of a good dinner and the tempting works that surround them, may be induced to bestow their patronage in a larger and more liberal manner than they would under less favourable circumstances. The number of guests invited to this dinner is rigorously limited to a hundred and forty, and no person who does not come within the above definition has the slightest chance of admission. At the close of the exhibition, and before the distribution of the pictures, a *soirée* is given, to which all the exhibitors are invited, as also the patrons and friends of art. Admission to this entertainment is not quite so difficult.

We shall now say something as to the building which the Royal Academy occupies. Previous to the year 1837 the Royal Academy occupied rooms in Somerset-house; in that year Government granted apartments in the National Gallery, Trafalgar-square. In Somerset-house, the rooms used for the exhibition were called the Great Room, the School of Painting, the Ante-Room, the Antique Academy, the Council Room, the Library and the Model Academy; in their new house the rooms are called the East Room, the Middle Room, the West Room, the South Room, for drawings and miniatures, the North Room, the Octagon Room, and the Sculpture Room. The Octagon Room, which was familiarly designated "the condemned cell," has not latterly been used for the purposes of exhibition. The removal excited some difference of opinion at the time, and there are many who still question its expedience. It has been suggested, by the opponents of the Academy, that to bring the National Gallery and the Royal Academy under the same roof, must have the effect of subjecting the former to the influence of the latter; whilst even those who do not regard the Royal Academy with an unfavourable eye, complain that it is manifestly unjust to devote any part of the National Gallery to the purposes of the Academy, whilst the national pictures are excluded for want of room. It is only just, however, to the Royal Academy to note that, although these rooms are granted to them rent free, they are still liable to a very heavy impost in the way of taxes and rates.

The Royal Academy occupies a portion of the eastern half of the building known as the National Gallery. On the ground floor on the east side of the passage which passes through the building is the Library and Council-room; the former looking out upon Trafalgar-square, and the latter in the opposite direction. The Library is a handsome room, and contains a valuable collection of works upon art, portfolios of prints, &c., arranged in presses round the room. Thanks to the courtesy of the librarian, Mr. Pickersgill, we were enabled to inspect this, and found everything in excellent order. Accommodation is provided for the students in the Library, which they are permitted to use all day on Monday, and on the evenings of Tuesdays and Thursdays. The walls are decorated with some fine drawings by Stothard, and even the fireplace is a splendid original bas-relievo of the Virgin and Child by Michael Angelo. This was presented by Sir George Beaumont. Upon the ceiling are four paintings by Angelica Kauffman. The Council Chamber is a noble apartment, the walls and ceiling of which are decorated with paintings by the most celebrated academicians. The chimney-piece of the room is a most exquisite work in marble, chiselled by some Italian sculptor. The chair occupied by the president is the veritable one used by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as old-fashioned and solid a piece of furniture as

need be. Here are displayed some of the diploma pictures and sculptures which each academican is bound to present after his election. In former days these works used to be exhibited; but now, so cramped is the Academy for want of room, that not only is the exhibition of them impossible, but they have to be hidden away in closets and cupboards during the annual exhibition. During the same period, also, the art schools are necessarily displaced. Among the most celebrated of the diploma pictures are the "Rustic Girl," by Sir Thomas Lawrence; "The Tribute Money," by Copley; "Christ blessing Little Children," by West; "Killing Rats," by Wilkie; "Infancy and Age," by Opie; and portraits of themselves by Gainsborough and Sir Joshua. Among the sculptures are Banks's "Falling Giant;" Flaxman's "Apollo and Marpessa;" the bust of Flaxman, by Baily; and a "Cupid and Psyche," by Nolckens. We may also notice a copy of Leonarda da Vinci's "Last Supper," made by his pupil, Marco D'Oggrine; a copy of the "Descent from the Cross," by Rubens; Thornhill's copies of the Cartoons of Raffaele; two magnificent cartoons, by Leonarda da Vinci; and a "Holy Family," sculptured in bas-relief, by Michael Angelo.

The hall of the Royal Academy is filled with casts of some of the most famous statues on the Continent, which are used in the Antique School. These were obtained by Canova, at the instance of George the Fourth, and include the Niobe group, the Egyptian and Olympian Jupiters, Apollo and the Muses, the Laocöon, the Mercury of the Vatican, Fauns and Cymbals, and the Fighting and Dying Gladiators.

The constitution of the Academy, and the position which it occupies, has excited so much acrimonious discussion among artists, that to review the whole question thoroughly would require a space at least equal to that which we have devoted to these Memoirs. We must content ourselves, therefore, with observing that its semi-private, semi-public character appears to have both advantages and disadvantages. Its exclusion of the members of all other societies puts it into a state of antagonism with those societies, for which there seems to be no necessity. The Royal Society does not exclude the members of other learned and scientific societies; on the contrary, by keeping on friendly terms with them, it maintains that lead and chieftainship which is its due. If the Academy were an absolutely public body, and had a charter, it might be worthy of consideration whether the magnificent collection of prints at the British Museum, which is now, as it were, buried, is almost useless for educational purposes, might not be rendered available in connection with it; and whether, also, something might not be granted out of the national purse to increase the scope of its usefulness. There can be no doubt that within its means the Academy does a great deal of solid good; but there can also be no doubt that its history shows traces of that cliquism and intrigue which seem inseparable from private bodies. Another great error in the constitution, is the tenacity with which the members adhere to rules which were framed at a time when art was at a very low ebb. If forty academicians were thought necessary to represent the condition of English art in 1769, the number ought certainly now to be multiplied by three or four. Shee went rather too far when he said that he knew of no man of genius outside the Academy; for, at the very time he said so, John Martin was outside its doors, and they never were opened to him. In our own day such a statement would be absurd; the walls of the exhibition-rooms would refute it; for, whilst inside the Academy we find more than one name but too little known to the public, outside are many which will shine glorious in the rolls of British art. The present list of academicians, taken altogether, is perhaps the most satisfactory one that the history of the Academy can show; yet there are many names in high honour among us which assuredly it does not contain.

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